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**POCKET COMPANION
FOR A PILGRIM.**

POCKET COMPANION

FOR A PILGRIM

THROUGH THE BRIEF SPACE OF LIFE,

TO THE

GRAND CONSUMMATION OF ALL OUR HOPES;

EVEN THE

APPEARING OF THE GREAT GOD, AND OUR
SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST.



LONDON :

WERTHEIM AND MACINTOSH,
24, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1854.

101. d. 444.

**WERTHEIM AND MACINTOSH,
24, PATERNOSTER-BOW, LONDON.**

PREFATORY NOTICE.

THE following series of extracts was prepared by a Christian lady for her own use, and with the intention of printing a small number of copies only, for private circulation among her own friends. On fuller reflection, however, it seemed a pity that these gems of thought, so well adapted for Christian use, as a brief manual of daily meditation, should be turned into a spiritual luxury for a few persons, and not rendered accessible to a wider circle of readers, to whom they could hardly fail to be acceptable, from their sterling merit, and the rich treasure they contain, in a small compass, of spiritual truth and wisdom. She has, therefore, consented to their publication, requesting me, as a personal friend, to introduce them to the public with a few prefatory lines.

The extracts, arranged as a short daily portion for three months, will form, I think, their own best introduction. They breathe, in every part, the fragrance of deep, simple, Gospel truth. Their tendency is to humble the sinner, to glorify the Saviour, and to promote personal holiness—the three-fold cord of all true and vital godliness. Most of the names are those of writers whose praise is in all the Churches for sound doctrine and experimental piety ; and I have no doubt that those who are led to make use of this little compilation will find it, like the angel's gift to Elijah, “a cake baken upon the coals, and a cruse of living water,” to refresh them on their journey through the wilderness of life, till they reach a better mountain than that which burned with fire, and their feet stand at last on the heavenly Zion.

T. R. BIRKS.

Kelshall Rectory, May 11, 1854.

PREFACE.

SEARCH (with prayer and supplication) the Divine Oracles, that ye may know whither ye are travelling in the journey of life ; for each day brings us nearer to mansions in the skies, or to "the blackness of darkness for ever." Solemn and momentous reflection ! particularly if we consider that God, in his unerring Word, has revealed that *few* there be that find the narrow way that leadeth unto life ; and that even the righteous *scarcely* are saved ; although the fountain that was opened upon Calvary, for sin and for uncleanness, is said to *exceed* the offence, and that the gift by grace hath *much more* abounded. Then wherefore *few* ? Because we come not with a *single* eye, and a *whole* heart, to Jesus, the "Lamb of God, which taketh

away the sin of the world." How few there be that can say, "This *one* thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth to those things which are before, I *press* toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

CONTENTS.

	Page
Meditation.....	<i>T. Watson.</i> 1
Christian Fellowship	<i>Ibid.</i> 2
Meditation and Practice	<i>Ibid.</i> 3
Self-denial	<i>E. Bickersteth.</i> 4
Conflict with In-dwelling Sin	<i>H. Venn.</i> 5
” ” ”	<i>T. Charles.</i> 6
Man's Insufficiency and Christ's Fulness ...	<i>Romaine.</i> 7
Working Faith	<i>Rev. W. Bridge.</i> 8
Waiting on the Lord	<i>J. Owen.</i> 9
Death Desired	<i>H. Venn.</i> 10
Sowing and Reaping	<i>T. Jones.</i> 11
All Ordered of God	<i>H. M^rN—</i> 12
Worldly Conformity	<i>T. Watson.</i> 13
Regeneration	<i>T. Jones.</i> 14
Meditation	<i>H. Venn.</i> 15
Divine Guidance	<i>Berridge.</i> 16
Regeneration	<i>T. Watson.</i> 17
False Humility	<i>J. Owen.</i> 18
Dominion over Sin	<i>T. Watson.</i> 19
Delight in God	<i>J. Howe.</i> 20
Christian Consistency.....	<i>E. Bickersteth.</i> 21
The Shortness of Time.....	<i>T. Watson.</i> 22

	Page
God's Delight in His Children	<i>J. Owen.</i> 23
Tests of Delight in God	<i>T. Watson.</i> 24
The Providence of God.....	<i>T. Charles.</i> 25
Death Desired	<i>R. Baxter.</i> 26
" One Thing is Needful ".....	<i>T. Watson.</i> 27
Victory of the Saints	<i>Ibid.</i> 28
Few Saved	<i>Ibid.</i> 29
On Prayer.....	<i>Berridge.</i> 30
Self Examination.....	<i>Leighton.</i> 31
Christian Consistency Enjoined	<i>T. Watson.</i> 32
Decision	<i>C. Cecil.</i> 33
Affliction	<i>M^c Cheyne.</i> 34
Consideration	<i>Ibid.</i> 35
Assurances	<i>J. Owen.</i> 36
The Christian Race	<i>H. Venn.</i> 37
Unbelief.....	<i>T. Watson.</i> 38
Communion with God.....	<i>Berridge.</i> 39
Christian Consistency.....	<i>E. Bickersteth.</i> 40
Prayer	<i>T. Watson.</i> 41
Divine Strength	<i>Berridge.</i> 42
Strait is the Gate	<i>T. Charles.</i> 43
Ways of Pleasantness	<i>Bickersteth.</i> 44
Zeal Enjoined	<i>T. Watson.</i> 45
Christ's Kingdom Everlasting	<i>R. Baxter.</i> 46
Zeal Enjoined	<i>T. Watson.</i> 47
Worldly Friendship.....	<i>Ibid.</i> 48
Christian Joy	<i>Ibid.</i> 49
The Christian Warfare.....	<i>Berridge.</i> 50
" " " 	<i>T. Charles.</i> 51
Election	<i>T. Watson.</i> 52
Affliction	<i>T. Charles.</i> 53

	Page
All things loss for Christ	<i>R. Cecil.</i> 54
Regeneration	<i>J. Howe.</i> 55
Justification and Sanctification	<i>Berridge.</i> 56
Nature and Grace	<i>T. Jones.</i> 57
Love to Christ	<i>Ibid.</i> 58
Character Unchanged by Death.....	<i>Cumming.</i> 59
Christian Joy	<i>Ibid.</i> 60
Growth in Grace	<i>T. Jones.</i> 61
On Holiness.....	<i>Cumming.</i> 62
Christian Devotedness	<i>T. Jones.</i> 63
The Righteous righteous still	<i>Cumming.</i> 64
Insufficiency of the Creature	<i>Chalmers.</i> 65
On Prayer	<i>T. Charles.</i> 66
"To be carnally-minded is death".....	<i>Cumming.</i> 67
On Affliction	<i>R. Hall.</i> 68
Nature and Grace	<i>R. Cecil.</i> 69
Spiritual Gifts	<i>Ibid.</i> 70
Death, preparation for	<i>E. Bickersteth.</i> 71
Sovereignty and Responsibility	<i>T. Jones.</i> 72
Death of Friends.....	<i>H. Blunt.</i> 73
Providence	<i>W. Jay.</i> 74
"All things are yours".....	<i>Sir H. Davy.</i> 75
"Examine yourselves"	<i>Cumming.</i> 76
"That no man take Thy Crown"	<i>Leighton.</i> 77
The Bride of Christ	<i>Hewitson.</i> 78
She follows Christ	<i>Cumming.</i> 79
"To Obey is better than Sacrifice"	<i>Leighton.</i> 80
"Love not the World"	<i>Ibid.</i> 81
Afflictions beneficial.....	<i>Hewitson.</i> 82
"O God, my heart is <i>fixed</i> "	<i>Leighton.</i> 83
"Work out your own Salvation"	<i>Hewitson.</i> 84

	Page
The Church of Christ	<i>T. Jones.</i> 85
Where <i>is</i> the Church?	<i>Ibid.</i> 86
Behold the Church rising!	<i>Ibid.</i> 87
How does the Church travel?	<i>Ibid.</i> 88
Life a Tale	<i>Hewitson.</i> 89
Want of Zeal	<i>T. Jones.</i> 90
The Judgment	<i>Cumming.</i> 91
Self-Distrust	<i>Bishop Reynolds.</i> 92

1st MONTH.]

PSALM CXXXIX. 18.

[1st DAY.

"WHEN I awake, I am still with thee." Here you have the very portraiture of a godly man drawn out; he is one that is "still with God." It was David's happiness that he lived above the common-rate of men, not only as he was higher in power and dignity, being a king, but higher in sublimeness of affection, having his heart and hope raised above the world. Divines give many reasons why David was called a man after God's own heart; but surely this is not the least, because the frame of his heart was so *heavenly*, this being most agreeable to God's nature and will. David was a man who, as Ambrose speaks, lived *in* the world, *above* the world. As soon as he awoke, he stepped into heaven. David was a seraphical saint, a mortal angel; like a true bird of paradise, he did seldom touch with his feet upon the earth. He was least alone, when he was most alone. Nor was this only when the fit was upon him, a thought of God, and away; but it was a fixed temper of heart. "I am still with thee." The pulse of his soul was still beating after God. The hypocrite may have a blush of godliness which is quickly over, but the constitution of David's soul was heavenly. "When I awake, I am still with thee."—*Rev. Thomas Watson.*

1ST MONTH.]

PSALM CXIX. 63.

[2D DAY.

"I AM a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts." If you would be "still with God," be much in the communion of saints. Many Christians live as if this article were blotted out of their creed. How doth one saint sharpen another. As vain company cools good affections, so by being in the communion of saints, we are warmed and quickened. "My delight," said David, "is with the *saints* that are upon earth, and such as *excel* in virtue." Thus may you arrive at this blessed frame. "I am *still* with thee."—*Rev. Thomas Watson.*

Let all our meetings now be made,
Subservient to each other's good,
For worldly joys must quickly fade,
Nor can they yield substantial food.

Teach us, though in a world of sin,
Heaven's blessed employment to begin;
To speak our great Redeemer's praise,
And love his name, and learn his ways.

1ST MONTH.]

PROVERBS XXIII. 7.

[3D DAY.

"As he thinketh in his heart, so is he." As the meditation is, such is the man. Meditation is the touchstone of a Christian; it shows what metal he is made of. It is a spiritual index. The index shows what is in the book. So meditation shows what is in the heart.—*Rev. Thomas Watson.*

The calm retreat, the silent shade,
With praise and prayer agree;
And seem by thy rich bounty made
For those who follow thee.

PSALM CXIX. 32.

"I WILL run the way of thy commandments." Meditation and practice must go hand-in-hand. The end of meditation is action. We must not only *meditate* in God's law, but *walk* in his law. Meditation and practice are like a pair of compasses; a Christian by meditation fixes upon God as the centre, and by practice goes round the circumference of the commandments.—*Ibid.*

Make me to walk in thy commands,
'Tis a delightful road;
Nor let my head, nor heart, nor hands,
Offend against my God.

1st MONTH.]

MATTHEW XVI. 24.

[4TH DAY.

"IF any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." I wish you to have all joy, and no sorrow ; all good, and no evil ; all holiness, and no sin ; and so you will by and by, when you reach your heavenly home, *but not yet*. For the way to this is through self-sacrifice, and self-denial, taking up your cross daily, following Christ, and suffering for well-doing. By and by, music and dancing, and every instrument of music, and every motion of joy, will all be redeemed and sanctified ; but the god of this world has now so got possession of the palace here, that we are continually tempted to walk in his territories, instead of walking in the narrow way of holiness, where no lion can come, nor any ravenous beast is found. Remember the *border-lines* are the scenes of danger, full of sharp-shooters,—very quick to discern a straying soldier.—*Rev. E. Bickersteth.*

Far from the world, O Lord, I flee,
From strife and tumult far ;
From scenes where Satan wages still
His *most successful* war !

1ST MONTH.]

JUDGES III. 1, 4.

[5TH DAY.

"Now these are the nations which the Lord left to *prove* Israel: to know whether they would hearken unto the commandments of the Lord." "The Lord left those nations without driving them out *hastily*."

It sometimes occasions a great trial of faith, and a painful submission of our understanding to God, to reconcile the absolute promises in Christ, and the success and prevalence of prayer, with the *experience* of the people of God. When I consider the slow progress I have made, the many evil thoughts, the continual defilement, and extreme weakness and inconstancy of mind I labour under, I am ready to cry out, Is there unfaithfulness in God? But all this is quite *necessary* to mortify my vanity, to deepen my convictions of sin, to make self abhorred, earth appear a howling wilderness, and a better and more holy state of existence longed for.
—*Rev. Henry Venn.*

Bow'd down beneath a load of sin,
By Satan sorely prest,
Fightings without, and fears within,
I come to Thee for rest!

1st MONTH.]

ROMANS VII. 24.

[6TH DAY.

"WHO shall deliver me from the body of this death?" There is a provision made against all our corruptions. Torment us they *may*, but they shall never destroy us. Torment us in the most distressing manner indeed they daily do, and *will*! The thought of being soon for ever delivered from them, gave me, in my last illness, the sincerest joy. No outward trouble, I am sure ever *did*, or ever *can* give me so much uneasiness and sorrow, as the incessant workings of my corruptions continually do. I hope, therefore, to be evermore thankful for every cross, disappointment, sickness, trouble, which hath the smallest tendency to weaken my corruptions; to make me more dead to the world and to myself, and more alive to God, and the things of God. There is within me so much pride to be subdued, so much worldly-mindedness to be destroyed, so much unbelief to be rooted out, and so much self to be denied, that my heart should overflow with gratitude when I feel God's hand upon me. I hope to look more to the *end* than the *means*—beyond the rod, to the fruits of righteousness; and as nothing but holiness will be of any service to me, may I be thankful for everything, however grievous now, which may tend to promote it in my soul.—*Rev. Thos. Charles, of Bala.*

1ST MONTH.]

JOHN XV. 5.

[7TH DAY.

"HE that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for *without me* ye can do nothing." I observe your complaints: I should tremble for you were you delivered from them. The sight and sense of that of which you complain, are from God. The application is *not* from Him. You feel *sin*: that is right, but it should lead you to Jesus. You feel *remaining sin*: still His blood has almighty power and virtue, to pardon and to subdue. Your duties do not please yourself; I am glad of it. Woe be to you when you take any delight in your own doing. But you pray so badly. The best prayer that ever was made, was made by him who had the least dependance on it. Rich perfume from the Mediator, must make acceptable your person and *all* your duties. My dear Sir, you must be content to be what you *feel* yourself to be,—a poor sinner, saved by *Jesus*. A helpless creature, saved by the arm of Jesus; and one who without Christ can do nothing, presenting himself and his duties for acceptance in the Beloved. I have often heard you with delight, not to yourself, but to me, giving real evidence of the truth of grace, and also of the *power* of it. Much I have to say, and if you provoke me may say it, *against* Mr. T., and *for* Jesus Christ.—*W. Romaine*.

1st MONTH.]

JAMES II. 20.

[8TH DAY.

"FAITH without works is dead." Faith is a working, an active grace; and therefore, if I be not a *worker* for God it proves that I have none of this faith. True faith will do *great* things for God. What shall we say to those who cannot do *small* things? Let not men be deceived. I say again, saving faith is a *venturing* grace. It will venture far *for* God; and far *after* God. Mistake not, you may do great things by faith in a small employment. You will say, How shall I do great things by faith? First, study much the greatness of God; secondly, look to the Lord, and attend Him in the use of ordinances, to strengthen and improve your faith. Those that cast off the ordinances, live by experiences, by revelations, impressions, and visions; I had almost said, by fancies. Thirdly, Do not check your faith—there are many who do so. They check their faith by *doubting*, and cast off their faith by *unbelief*. Fourthly, Use your faith to do *small* things. It is a good rule, do not commit any sin because it is small; do not neglect any duty or privilege because it is not great. Lastly, Look much upon the call—which you have to any work: and do not stand poring upon your own ability, or upon the difficulty of the work. Say not, "I am not able; I have no parts, nor gifts; the work is beyond me—I cannot believe: my heart is dead." Whereas, if men did but look upon the call of God, they would be able to do great things. Either you are called to believe, or not. If you are not called to believe, then unbelief is no sin; and if you are, then look to Jesus to remove every difficulty and obstruction.—*Rev. W. Bridge.*

1ST MONTH.]

PSALM XXVII. 14.

[9TH DAY.

“WAIT, I say, on the Lord.” Shall grasshoppers, a drop of the bucket, dust of the balance, things less than nothing, repine against, or wax weary of the will of the glorious and lofty One? All our weariness of his dispensations towards us arises from secret imaginations that He is such a one as ourselves; one that is to do nothing but what seems good in *our* eyes. But if we cannot comprehend his being, we cannot make rules to judge of his ways and proceedings. We are of yesterday, change every moment, and are leaving our station to-morrow. God hath his being, not in a duration of time, but in eternity. Hence Habakkuk draws his conclusion against making haste in any condition, and for tarrying and waiting for God. Let us, then, in all our hastes and heats, that our spirits in any condition are prone to, consider what frame of heart will become us, and be safest for us. Be they spiritual depths, *providential* depths, depths of trouble or affliction, that we may be exercised with in the holy, wise providence of God, it will be but a few days before all the veils and shades that are about us shall be taken away. Let us, therefore, know, that nothing in our dealings with Him doth better become us than silently to *wait* for Him, and what He will speak to us in our straits. This, in all our extremities, must we bring our souls unto, before we can attain any rest or peace.—*John Owen, D.D.*

1st MONTH.]

2 COR. V. 8.

[10TH DAY.

"WE are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." Much have I profited by "Adam's Private Thoughts." Among many beautiful and striking passages, I will mention one, which I instantly turned into a prayer for myself, and you, and all my Christian friends. The passage is that we may have a distinct consciousness of the infinite superiority of the heavenly state above the present, strong desires after it, a meetness for it in Christ, so that when the summons comes, we may rush into it with joy and transport. How few of us ever get to that most blessed state—*wishing to be gone*. Here we have abundant cause to cry out, Lord, help our unbelief! Lord, increase our faith!—*Rev. Henry Venn*.

Beyond the bounds of time and space,
Look forward to that heavenly place,
The saints' secure abode ;
On faith's strong eagle pinion rise,
And force your passage to the skies,
And scale the Mount of God.

1ST MONTH.]

GAL. VI. 7.

[11TH DAY.

“WHATSOEVER a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” Many wish to arrive in glory who dislike the *only* way that conducts us to it. While we *live*, let us live *to the Lord*. All that we do on earth is recorded in God’s book of remembrance, to be exposed before an assembled world in the last day. The thought of this should caution us while we are travelling to our eternal home. Every human being acts a part on earth, but what different ways they take, and how very differently they employ their time and talents. They are all sowing what they shall reap in the eternal world. Some sow the seed of endless misery, while others sow to the Spirit, and shall reap an eternal life of joy. Oh! the difference. Let us be at no small pains to realize that country, that our hearts may aspire more after it. *All* are for going to heaven; but how few have enlightened views, and correct ideas, as to what heaven consists of. All there is holiness, love, and happiness. If we really believe this, why have we so little longing after it? The only safe path thither is narrow, and God alone can guide us aright. Carefully avoid all unsuitable acquaintances. The Lord’s favourites should always be ours, for his will and pleasure are our law and rule. Stand steadfast, be earnest in prayer and constant watchfulness.—*Rev. Thomas Jones.*

1st MONTH.]

JOB XXIII. 14.

[12TH DAY.

"He performeth the thing that is *appointed* for me." I pause in devout admiration of the diversities of process by which the Shepherd of Israel guides his sheep and lambs through the rough, and dark, and rugged paths of their journey. He does not say *why*, with any reference to *individuals*. To attempt, in any individual case, to say why He does so, or so, is, in my opinion, to aim at being wise above what is written. Is it in love, for spiritual improvement; for advancement in willingness to be nothing, in willingness to give up even the notion of being peculiar in suffering, in willingness to be considered a very common thing, although uncommonly afflicted? Or is it in corrective discipline for offences past, or prevention of offences that might come? Or is it to show to wondering angels and devils what the grace of faith can do in trembling flesh, to the glory of the person and work of Jesus? Or is it to baffle all calculation of man that the Church may continue to walk not by sight, but by faith? Or what is it? Lord, *Thou* knowest.

Unfolding providence will rise,
Glorious to our admiring eyes,
When life's short race is run!

H. M.

1ST MONTH.]

2 TIM. IV. 10.

[13TH DAY.

"**DEMAS** hath forsaken me." Take heed of the world : the world cools good affections. The earth puts out the fire. The world's silver trumpet sounds a retreat, and calls men off from their pursuit after heaven. The world hindered the young man from following Christ ; and "**Demas** hath forsaken me," saith St. Paul, "having loved this present world." It was a saying of Pius Quintus, "When I first entered into orders, I had some good hope of salvation ; when I became a Cardinal, I doubted of it ; but since I came to be Pope, I do even *despair* of it." The world blinds men's eyes that they do not see the way of God's commandments. I have observed some who did once, Jehu-like, drive on furiously in the cause of religion, but when the world hath come in upon them, their chariot wheels have been pulled off, and they have driven on heavily. The world's music charms men asleep, and when they are asleep, they are not fit to work. A thing cannot be carried violently to two extremes at once ; so a man cannot be violent for heaven and earth at the same time. He cannot love Christ and the world. He that is all fire for the world will be all ice for heaven. Take heed of engaging your affections too far in these secular things. Use the world as your servant, but do not follow it as your master. "**Demas** hath forsaken me."—*Rev. Thomas Watson.*

1st MONTH.]

ROMANS VIII. 6.

[14TH DAY.

"To be carnally-minded is death." In the regeneration of a soul there must be a *real, radical, and thorough* change. There may be many changes in men's views, habits, and manners, which come *far short* of that *saving* change which God requires as necessary to salvation. That which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. He gives a divine life. That man receives a life essentially different from any that he had prior to regeneration. He receives a *new principle*. The man passes from death unto life. It is the most important change that ever a man passes through, for it is the commencement of eternal life, and of all that heaven can give! The *taste* of the heart discovers the state of the soul more clearly and certainly than any other test. The carnal mind relishes carnal things, and the spiritual mind relishes spiritual things. When you seek to know the state of your heart, inquire what you relish most, where your inclinations lead you, and where you take your chief delight; and that will at *once* prove the state and temper of your heart, far more than all other evidences. It behoves every one of us to ask, Am I *now* in the right way to God, and to eternal glory? Momentous question! —*Rev. Thomas Jones.*

1st MONTH.]

GENESIS XXIV. 63.

[15TH DAY.

"ISAAC went out to meditate in the field at the even-tide." Solitude is a great cherisher of faith; were we more *alone* to pray, and look into ourselves, to observe more of the amazing blindness of heart, unbelief, and selfishness which so benumb our feelings of the love of Christ; were we more alone for these purposes, we should enjoy more of the presence and joy of God. In the exercise of meditation and prayer, I can stand amazed, and be almost lost in astonishment at my misery and sinfulness—misery so great, in not feeling an everlasting admiration, love, and joy in our Incarnate Jehovah, and in the view of the great things of the Spirit of God which are revealed to me! What sacrilege am I committing, when the affections of my heart are so cold towards my Lord. Sometimes I have touches which I would give the world might last; but in an hour they are gone. Whilst they last, my heart swells with the vehement desire expressed in the hymn—

Nothing in all things may I see,
Nothing on earth desire, but *Thee*!

—*Rev. Henry Venn.*

1ST MONTH.]

PSALM XXXII. 8.

[16TH DAY.

"I WILL guide thee with mine eye." Pray frequently, and wait quietly, and the Lord will make your way plain. Jesus trains up his servants to *waiting*. Joseph must be cast first into a pit, and then into a prison, before he rules the kingdom: and David must be hunted as a partridge upon the mountains, before he gets the sceptre. Expect nothing but conflicts day after day, to humble you, and prove you. This is the high road to the kingdom for *all*—a road covered with bushes and brakes. Should you labour to remove them with your *own hands*, you will tear your flesh, and fill your fingers with thorns. Let your Master remove them at your request, and remember it is his delight to clear our way, and lead us on till sin and death are trodden down. Undertake nothing without first seeking direction from the Lord; and when anything offers that is plausible, beg of God to disappoint you, if it be not according to his mind. Go nowhere, settle nowhere, without much prayer. Be not in a hurry, lest you move without your passport, and then you go on a fool's errand. Do not wish to be anywhere but where you are. Daily beseech the Lord to make your way plain; then leave it to Him to direct your steps. Wish not to do good in America *next summer*, but to do good in England *every day* you continue here.—*Rev. J. Bertridge.*

1ST MONTH.]

ROMANS IX. 6.

[17TH DAY.

"THEY are not all Israel which are of Israel." I bless God that I see *some* of you walking in the truth when so many in the world are marching apace towards hell. O that I might see an increase of holiness among you, that more converts might be brought in : for, as ever you expect to go to the New Jerusalem when you *die*, become new creatures while you *live*. Rest not in baptismal privileges ; think not that an empty profession will save you ; millions will be sent to hell in Christ's livery. What talents hath He entrusted you with ! Every opportunity for heaven is a talent, and nothing more sure than that you will be called to an account shortly. Get up into your tower of meditation, and look often upon Him who is invisible.—*Rev. Thomas Watson.*

*My day of grace is spent in night,
Thy noon is in its prime ;
Oh ! turn and seek thy Saviour's face,
In this accepted time.
So, Gentile, may Jerusalem
A lesson prove to thee,
And in the New Jerusalem,
Thy home for ever be.*

1st MONTH.]

ISAIAH XLIX. 14.

[18TH DAY.

"Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me." Take heed of spending time in complaints, when vigorous actings of grace are your duty. Fruitless bemoanings of themselves and their condition is the *substance* of the profession that some make. These things are contrary to the life of faith; and yet some, I fear, please themselves in such a course, as if it had somewhat of *eminence* of religion in it. Others, it may be, drive the same trade in their *thoughts*, although they make not *outward* complaints. They are conversant, for the most part, with heartless despondings. We must say, to such complainers, as God did to Joshua—"Get you up; why lie you thus upon your face?" Are you in depths and doubts, not knowing what is your condition, nor whether you have any interest in the forgiveness that is with God? Watch and pray, fast and meditate, offer violence to your corruptions; press unto the throne of grace by prayer, supplications, importunities, and restless requests. These are *part* of the means that God hath appointed for the attainment of peace and assurance. Let us see what counsel the Holy Ghost gives in this condition. Why, saith He, "giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue;" and so on 2 Pet. i. 5—"For," saith He, "if ye do these things, an entrance shall be ministered unto you *abundantly* into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."—*John Owen, D.D.*

1st MONTH.]

JAMES II. 10.

[19TH DAY.

"WHOSOEVER shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." Beware of indulging *any sin*. Sin lived in will spoil all zeal for getting to heaven. Sin enfeebles ; it is like the cutting Samson's hair, and then the strength departs. Sin is the soul's sickness. Sickness takes a man off his legs, and doth so dispirit him, that he is unfit for any violent exercise. A sick man cannot run a race. Sin lived in takes a man quite off from duty, or makes him dead in it. How can he be earnest with God for mercy, whose heart accuseth him of secret sin ? Guilt breeds fear ; and that which strengthens fear, weakens zeal in duty. When Adam had lost his innocence, he was afraid, and hid himself. Therefore, lay the axe to the root ; let sin be hewn down : not only abstain from sin in the *act*, but let the *love of sin* be mortified, and let every sin be put to the sword. Many will leave all their sins but one : save *one sin*, and lose *one soul*. One sin is a fetter ; a man may lose the race as well by having *one* fetter on his leg as if he had more. I have read of a great monarch, Darius, that, flying from his enemy, he threw away the crown of gold from his head, that he might run the faster : so that sin which thou didst wear as a crown of gold, throw it away, that thou mayest the faster run to the heavenly kingdom.—
Rev. Thomas Watson.

1ST MONTH.]

PSALM X. 4.

[20TH DAY.

"God is not in all his thoughts." Consider, have not your thoughts of Him been slight and transient; have they not been superficial, casual only, and such as have dropped into your minds, as it were, by chance? Or have you been wont to compose yourself designedly, and on purpose, to think of Him, according to that "the desire of our soul is towards thy name, and to the remembrance of thee?" This is represented as the *usual posture* of them whom He reckons among his jewels, and for whom the book of remembrance was written. "They thought on his name;" a thing they might be known by, and distinguished from other men. Bethink yourselves how deeply culpable is your neglect to delight in God. Is there nothing else wherein you take pleasure? God hath no other rival than this world; it is something or other of *it* that prevails. Whither are you sunk? into how low and base a spirit, when you can take pleasure in such things, rather than in the blessed God, and quit so high and pure delights for mire and dirt! What has thus carnalized your minds, that you savour only of the things of this world, and divine things are tasteless and without relish?

Not all things else are half so dear
As his delightful presence *here*;
What must it be in heaven!

Rev. John Howe.

1st MONTH.]

PROVERBS IV. 23.

[21st DAY.

"KEEP thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." Christianity chiefly regards the thoughts, motives, and affections; it requires that every thought, word, and deed should be with a single eye to the glory of God; we must love God with all our heart; and let me add that remarkable text, "To be spiritually-minded is *life and peace*, but to be carnally-minded is *death*." Now, whenever there is a command, it is a duty to use *all means* in assisting us to obey it, and to avoid all those things which obstruct the performance of it. Whenever, therefore, I find anything, not a matter of duty, destroying or weakening my desire to please God, and strengthening my attachment to the world, it becomes my duty to refrain from it: this I find to be the case with dancing, and public amusements in general. They make my mind less serious. For the same reason, I dislike much company or bustle, into which I never yet went without coming back extremely dissatisfied with myself. They estrange my heart from religion. And lest we should regard little things as matters of indifference, it is said, "He that despiseth small things, shall fall by *little and little*." It is far more difficult to preserve a heavenly mind, when you join the world, than when you keep out of it. I could not, with any sincerity, pray, "Lead us not into temptation," if I voluntarily went into, what would be to me, a place of temptation.—*Rev. E. Bickersteth.*

1st MONTH.]

1 CORINTHIANS VII. 29.

[22d DAY.

"THE time is short." There is but a short space of time granted us ; therefore work the harder for heaven, before it be too late. Indeed, we are apt to dream of a long life, as if we were not sojourners, but natives, and were to stay here always. Childhood hopes to come to youth ; youth to the flower of age ; the flower of age to old age ; and old age to renew its strength as the eagle. But if we measure life by a pair of Scripture-compasses, it is very short : it is compared to a flying shadow, and to an hand-breadth, as if there were but a span between the cradle and the grave. Is life so short ? and it may be shorter than we are aware. What need then is there zealously to improve it before it be slipped away ! If time runs, "let us so run." He that hath a great business in hand, and the time allotted for doing it is but short, had not need lose any of that time. The night of death is drawing on, how should we use spurs to our sluggish hearts, that we may go on more swiftly. Again, a man's personal *day of grace* may be short. There is a time while the sceptre of grace is held forth ; whether this day may be longer or shorter we cannot tell ; but because it may so soon expire, it is wisdom to seize the present opportunity. "Now they are hid from thine eyes," is like the ringing a doleful knell over a dying person ; therefore put forth all violence for heaven, and do it "*to-day*," before it be too late, and the decree be gone forth.—*Rev. Thomas Watson.*

1st MONTH.]

LAMENTATIONS III. 56.

[23d DAY.

"HIDE not thine ear at my breathing, at my cry." Know that God despiseth not *small* things; He takes notice of the *least* breathings of our hearts after Him, when we ourselves can perceive no such thing. He knows the mind of the Spirit, in those workings which are never formed to that height that *we* can reflect upon them with *our* observation. Everything that is of Him is noted in his book, though not in ours: He took notice that, when Sarah was acting unbelief towards Him, yet she showed respect to her husband, calling him lord. He is a skilful refiner, that can find much gold in that ore where we see nothing but clay. He remembers the duties which we forget, and forgets the sins which we remember. He justifies our persons, though ungodly, and will also our duties, though not perfectly godly. Know that Jesus Christ takes whatever is evil out of them, and makes them acceptable. All the ingredients of self he takes away, and adds incense to what remains, and presents it to God. This is the cause that the saints at the last day, when they meet their own duties and performances, *they know them not*; they are so changed from what they were when they went out of our hands. "Lord, when saw we thee naked or hungry?" so that God accepts a little, and Christ makes our little a great deal. Yet I say not this to encourage us to abide in a feeble state. The reason why thou art no more holy, is because thou hast no more faith; the reason why thou art no more in duty, is because thou art no more in believing; and the reason why thy duties are weak and imperfect, is because thy faith is weak and imperfect.—*John Owen, D.D.*

1st MONTH.]

PSALM XXXVII. 4.

[24TH DAY.

"DELIGHT thyself also in the Lord." Tests of a Christian's delight in God:—He that delights in God is often thinking of Him; what a man delights in, his thoughts are still running upon—the mind will be still musing upon. Where there is a delight in the law of God, the mind is wholly busied about it. If we delight in religion, there is nothing can keep us from it—we shall be conversant with the Word, prayer, and sacraments. "I was *glad* when they said, Come, let us go up to the house of the Lord." Those that delight in religion are often speaking of it. Where there is grace *infused*, there will be grace *diffused*. David, delighting in God's testimonies, "would speak of them before kings." The primitive Christians did speak so much of heaven and the kingdom prepared, that the Emperor suspected they meant to take his kingdom from him. Words are the looking-glass of the mind—they show what is in the heart—where there is spiritual delight, it will have vent. This is a Scripture touch-stone to try men's hearts by. He that delights in God will give Him the *best* in every service. If he have anything better than other, *God* shall have it—the *strength* of his affections, the *cream* of his duties, "the *fat* of the offering." He that delights in God doth not much delight in anything else. The world appears in an eclipse—all earthly delights seem as nothing—he leaves the world behind. True delight is *constant*. Hypocrites have their pangs of desire and flashes of joy, which are soon over; but true delight, like the fire on the altar, never goes out.—*Rev. Thomas Watson.*

1st MONTH.]

PROVERBS XX. 24.

[25th DAY.

"MAN'S goings are of the Lord." I am happy to think that the Spirit observes every avenue of my soul, and can touch every spring that gives it motion; and therefore, can turn and influence it in the way, degree, and time He pleases. This is one of the chief springs of consolation, both as to temporal and spiritual things. The Spirit can in everything influence my heart, guide my thoughts, and direct my inclinations according to His will; and is in everything wise and good. If His will be so, He can incline me to a place or a thing, and effectually open a way through the thickest darkness, and greatest difficulties, for the accomplishment of His gracious purposes. Nor is there the least hope or comfort, peace or joy, but what He works and bestows; no relief in trouble, no refreshment in perplexities, but what He gives. And shall we by our negligence, sin, and folly, grieve Him, without whom we cannot think a good thought, cannot breathe a good desire! grieve Him whose presence is heaven in the soul, and whose absence is a hell of corruption, darkness, and misery! O what a creature man is! In what dust and ashes ought the best of us to lie down, and exclaim with the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner."—*Rev. T. Charles.*

1ST MONTH.]

PHIL. I. 23.

[26TH DAY.

"To be with Christ, which is far better." Be of good cheer, O my soul! it is thy Father's voice that calls thee *hence*: His voice that called thee into being, and out of a state of sin and death, and bid thee live unto Him. That called thee so often from the grave, forgave thy sins, and renewed thy strength, restored thee to the comforts of his house, and hath so graciously led thee through this howling wilderness, almost to the sight of the promised land. And wilt thou not willingly go, when such infinite love calls thee? Art thou not desirous of his presence? Art thou afraid to go to Him, who is the only cure of thy fears? What was it but this glory to which He elected thee? Not to the riches and honour of this life, but to a never-fading inheritance. To depart from this body is but to lay by an instrument when its work is done; a servant dismissed, when his service is ended; it is but a separation from a troublesome companion, and putting off a shoe that pinched me. Many a sad and painful hour, many a weary night and day have I had. What cares and fears, what griefs and groans has this body cost me. Alas! how much of my precious time has been spent to maintain, please, and repair it; reason wonders that so noble a spirit should be so meanly housed! And shall I take such a body to be better than heaven? Lord, tune my soul to sing thy praises *now*, that sweet experience may make me *long to be* where I shall do it better.—*Rev. R. Baxter.*

1st MONTH.]

LUKE X. 42.

[27TH DAY.

"ONE thing is needful." *This* is the one thing, to get Christ and heaven. If we would but look upon religion as the main business wherein our salvation is concerned, we should be violent in it. Have heaven *continually* in your eye. Set the crown ever before you, and that will provoke endeavour. The mariner hath his hand at the stern, and his eye to the star. While we are working, let us have an eye to that place where is Christ, the Bright and Morning Star. Every time you cast your eye to heaven, think, above that starry heaven is the empyrean heaven I am striving for. Thus did Moses. The eye of his faith quickened the feet of his obedience. He looked to the recompence of reward. When Christians lose their prospect of heaven, then they begin to slacken their pace in the way thither. If we could look upon the things of eternity as our business, the end for which we came into the world, how earnest should we be in the pursuit of them. If you would be violent for heaven, be sure you make going thither the "One thing." What a man looks on as an *indifferent* thing, he will never be violent for; but that which he makes his business, he will be industrious about. "One thing is needful."—*Rev. Thomas Watson.*

1ST MONTH.]

DANIEL XI. 32.

[28TH DAY.

"THE people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits." Take, for example, the saints of old, who have taken heaven by force. David broke his sleep for meditation. His violence for heaven boiled up to zeal; and St. Paul reached forth unto those things which were before,—a metaphor which signifies, to strain every limb. Anna, the prophetess, served God with fastings and prayers night and day. How industrious was Calvin. When his friends persuaded him to remit a little of his labours, he said, "Would ye have the Lord find me idle?" Luther spent three hours a-day in prayer. It is said of Bradford, preaching, reading, and prayer, were his whole life. "I rejoice," said Bishop Jewell, "that my body is exhausted in the labours of my calling." How violent were the blessed martyrs! They wore their fetters as ornaments; they snatched up torments as crowns, and embraced the flames as cheerfully as Elijah did the fiery chariot. "Let racks, fires, and pullies, and all manner of torments come, so that I may win Christ," said Ignatius. Write after *these* fair copies. For if the saints, with all their violence, have much ado to get to heaven, and the righteous *scarcely* are saved, how shall those come there who use no violence! And if those who strive as in an agony can *hardly* get in at the strait gate, what shall become of those who never strive at all? —Rev. Thomas Watson.

1ST MONTH.]

MATTHEW XXII. 14.

[29TH DAY.]

"FEW are chosen." Oh, often meditate on the *small* number of them that shall be saved! The meditation of this would keep us from marching along with the multitude. The multitude usually goes wrong. Most men walk after the course of this world; that is, the lusts of their hearts, and the fashions of the times. They march after the prince of the air. The meditation of this would make us turn out of the common road. Among the swarms of people in the world there are but few believers. How few in the world know Christ! How few believe in Him! How few strike sail to his sceptre! Satan takes most hearts. How many formalists are there in the world—whose religion is a paint which a storm of persecution will wash off,—not an engraving. Meditation on the fewness of them that shall be saved, would make us walk tremblingly. Few find the way; and when they have found it, few walk in it. The thoughts of this would work holy fear; not a despairing, but a cautious fear. This fear the eminent saints have had. This fear is joined with hope. "The Lord takes pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy." A child of God fears because the gate is strait; but hopes, because Christ has opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers.—*Rev. Thomas Watson.*

1st MONTH.]

PSALM LXII. 8.

[30TH DAY.

"POUR out your hearts before *Him*." This is a precious command. Many times the children of God are so burdened with grief, sin, and worldly care, that they know not how to bear them; and their bosom is so full of sorrow that they sit down and mourn over their hard lot. The devil dearly loves to see a child of God fold his hands, and say, "What a sad condition I am in; I dare not go to the Lord, I am so miserable." Well, suppose you are, where would you go? Others are running about from post to pillar, desiring to know what they shall do; their trials are so great, they know not how to be delivered out of them; and they go and ask one neighbour and another, till they tire them all out. Now, what does the *Lord* say to them? He gives good advice; instead of making neighbours your counsellors, go to *Him*, who is the Chief Counsellor, able to tell you what to do, and willing to relieve you at all times. The first thing which He tells you to do is, "Pour out your hearts before me." He is never weary with hearing the complaints of his people. Whatever burden you have upon your heart, the Lord would not have you suffer it to rest there; for if you do, it will rankle, and make you feeble. Christ never turns any away. Whatever your circumstances may be,—you may look this way and that way, and find no place to flee to,—but Jesus is ever a refuge for your soul. "The name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous runneth into it, and is safe."—*Rev. John Berridge*.

1st MONTH.]

JOB VII. 20.

[31st DAY.

"I HAVE sinned." A good conscience is a *waking, speaking* conscience, and the conscience that questions itself the most, is, of all sorts, the best. The great business of conscience is to hold courts in the soul; and it is of continual necessity that it be so: there can be no vacation of this judicature without great damage to the soul. Yet men do easily turn from this work as hard and unpleasant, and allow business, weariness, or trifling company to cry down their conscience, and so make a continual noise that the voice of it may not be heard: force it to desist, and leave them to their own ways. But *know*, you who take this course, you are providing the severest judgment for yourselves by this *disturbing* of judgment. *Know*, that both *it* and *you* must answer unto God, and when He shall make inquiry it *must* report, and report as the truth is. What shall the soul say in that day? Whereas, if it had given way to conscience, and *judged*, and *rectified* matters, so that it could have answered concerning its procedure that way, what conscience had done God would not do over again. *It* hath judged; then I acquit. For, "if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged." "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso *confesseth* and *forsaketh* them shall have mercy."—*Archbishop Leighton.*

2D MONTH.]

PSALM XXXVII. 30.

[1ST DAY.

"THE mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment." We must offer violence to ourselves in holy *conferences*, for it will not be done without it: indeed, we are backward enough to it, therefore had need herein provoke ourselves. A gracious person hath not only religion in his heart, but in his tongue; he drops holy words as pearls. It is the fault of Christians that they do not in company stir up themselves to set good discourse on foot; it is a *sinful* modesty. There is much visiting, but they do not give one another's souls a visit. In worldly things, their tongue is as the pen of a ready writer; but in matters of religion, they are as if their tongue did cleave to the roof of their mouth. As we must answer to God for *idle words*, so for *sinful silence*. Let us set abroad good discourse. What should our words dilate and expatiate upon but heaven? The world is a great inn, and we are the guests—when we meet together, we should not be talking about the world; we are to leave this presently: but we should talk of our heavenly country. The discourse demonstrates what the heart is. Vain speeches discover a light, feathery heart; gracious speeches are the birth of a gracious heart. The water of the conduit shows what the spring is. "Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh."—*Rev. Thomas Watson.*

2D MONTH.]

1 KINGS XVIII. 21.

[2D DAY.

“How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow Him; but if Baal, then follow him.” Too many young persons think they are left at liberty to expose themselves to all the temptations and dangers of mixing in the world. They say, “We are not yet decided.” Not decided, when God has already decided for you, by planting you in his Church! This plea is most *unreasonable*. Not decided, when the decision rests between the service of God and of Satan! Not decided, when the stake is between heaven and hell! “Oh, but we hope *soon* to decide in favour of religion.” This plea is *presumptuous*. Where is to-morrow? In another world! Delay not. But some say, “We do not wish to make a *profession*, lest we should dishonour it.” Many delude themselves with this saying, as though it resulted from a conscientious principle. But it is, on the contrary, a *great sin* to make no profession of religion. It is to omit a duty absolutely required in Scripture. It shows great pride of heart, less fearful of living in rebellion against God, than of incurring the reproach of man. If *sincerely* alleged, it proves great ignorance of the nature of true religion, which never supposes any power in man to act consistently without the constant aid of the Holy Spirit, whose influences are promised to those who ask them.—C. Cecil.

2D MONTH.]

REVELATION VII. 14.

[3D DAY.

"THESE are they that came out of great tribulation." Every one that gets to the throne must put their foot upon the thorn. The way to the crown is by the cross. We must taste the gall if we are to taste the glory. When justified by faith, God led them into tribulations also. When God brought Israel through the Red Sea, He led them into the wilderness; so when God saves a soul, He tries it. He *never* gives faith without trying it. The way to Zion is through the valley of Baca. You must go through the wilderness of Jordan, if you are to come to the land of promise. Some believers are much surprised when they are called to suffer. They thought they would do some great thing for God: but all that God permits them to do is to suffer. Go round every one in glory,—every one has a different story, yet every one has a tale of suffering. But *mark*, all are brought out of them. It was a dark cloud, but it passed away; they have reached the other side. Not one of them blames God for the road He led them. "Salvation!" is their only cry. Do not sin against God by murmuring at your lot. You must have a palm, as well as a white robe. No thorn, no throne; no gall, no glory. Often we feel as if we could go no further, but must lie down and die. Temptations feel too much for us. Let us *glory* in tribulations. When we are with Christ, all our pains shall be ended.—*Rev. R. M'Cheyne.*

2D MONTH.]

HEBREWS III. 1.

[4TH DAY.]

"CONSIDER the Apostle and High Priest of our profession." How is it that death, judgment, and eternity make so little impression upon most men's minds? Because they never stop to think, but hurry on through life, and find themselves in eternity before they have once put the question, "What must I do to be saved?" More souls are lost through inconsideration than any other way. The reason why men are not awakened, and made anxious for their souls, is, that the devil never gives them time to consider. Therefore God cries, Stop, poor sinner, stop and think. *Consider* your ways: *consider* your latter end. How is it that you do not enjoy peace? God answers the question—"Israel doth not know. My people doth not *consider*." You are so busy looking at books, or looking at men, or looking at the world, that you have no time, no heart for looking at Christ. Oh, what mean, despicable thoughts you have of the glorious Immanuel! The *most* never come to Jesus, and are lost. But the eye of faith sees beyond the stars, it pierces to the throne of God, and there it looks upon the face of Jesus. The poor, blind world cannot see that there is a joy which it cannot give or take away, but the believer rejoices with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. They pass with Jesus within the veil, and enjoy a heaven upon earth. Does your heart dwell there? *Consider!*—*Rev. R. M'Cheyne.*

2D MONTH.]

2 CORINTHIANS V. 4.

[5TH DAY.

"WE that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened." Evangelical assurance is not a thing incapable of variation. It may be higher or lower; obscure, or attended with more evidence. It *encourages* us in our combat, it delivers us not *from* it. We may have peace with God, when we have none from the assaults of Satan. God sometimes marvellously raises the souls of his saints by giving them a sense of his eternal love. But this life is not a season to be always taking wages in. Our work is not yet done; we are not always to abide in this Mount: we must down again into the battle, fight again, cry again, complain again. Shall the soul be thought now to have lost its assurance? *Not at all*; it had before assurance, with joy and triumph; it hath it now, or *may* have, with wrestling, cries, tears, and supplications: and a man's assurance may be as *good*, as *true*, when he lies on the earth with a sense of sin, as when he is carried up to the third heaven with a sense of love, and foretaste of glory. Assurance, for the most part, produceth these effects following. It gives delight in obedience, and draws out love in the duties that we perform unto God. It casts out tormenting fear, such as fills the soul with hard thoughts of God, and dreadful apprehensions of wrath to come. It gives the soul a hope and expectation of the glory that shall be revealed. Hence arises a spring of secret relief that calms the heart and quiets the spirit, in the midst of many a storm. Wherever there is the root of assurance, there will be this fruit of *hope*.—*John Owen, D.D.*

2D MONTH.]

HEBREWS XII. 1.

[6TH DAY.

“**RUN** with patience the race that is set before us.” I have often found much comfort and rest to my soul in this Scripture. The Lord’s people from the womb to the grave, have all their several places, for their childhood, their youth, their riper years, to the hour of their death, as well as the cause and manner of it, appointed in infinite wisdom, and in everlasting love to their souls. And there is a set time how long their friends shall remain with them, what they shall do in their favour ; also what crosses and disappointments, and ill-usage they shall meet with, and from what quarter it shall come. This race, set, then, we are to run with patience ; not fretting, or murmuring, not desponding or doubting the goodness and love of the Great Ordainer of all our lot, not even presuming to wish there was any alteration in our circumstances, unless God is pleased to bring it to pass. It is a great part of the spiritual worship due to Him, and by which we honour Him, thus to commit without carefulness all our affairs into his hands ; and when we do so, He has promised that his peace shall rule in our hearts.—*Rev. Henry Venn.*

2D MONTH.]

HEBREWS III. 19.

[7TH DAY.

"THEY could not enter in, because of unbelief." Take heed of unbelief. Unbelief is a great hindrance, as it is discouraging. When a Christian is working for heaven, unbelief whispers thus:—To what purpose is all this pains? I had as good sit still. I may pray, and not be heard; I may work, and have no reward; I may come near heaven, and yet miss it. Unbelief destroys hope; and if you cut this sinew of religion, all violence for heaven ceaseth. Unbelief raiseth a cloud of despondency in the heart. Alas! you will never be able to go through the work of religion—so many precepts to obey, so many temptations to resist; so many afflictions to bear, that you will fall under the burden, you will tire in your march to heaven. Unbelief raiseth jealous thoughts of God; it represents Him as an austere Master. This discourageth the soul in the use of means. Unbelief doth as Tobiah did to the Jews. "They made us afraid, saying, Their hands shall be weakened from the work." We read of Jeroboam's arm being withered. Unbelief withers the arm of the soul, that it cannot stretch itself forth to any spiritual action. Unbelief doth the devil the greatest kindness; it makes way for his temptations to enter, which do so enchant and bewitch us that we cannot work. Beware of this sin; believe the promise, "The Lord is good to the soul that seeketh Him." Do but seek Him with importunity, and He will open both his heart and heaven to you.—*Rev. Thomas Watson.*

2D MONTH.]

PSALM CIV. 34.

[8TH DAY.

"MY meditation of Him shall be sweet." Believers who are much in secret prayer and meditation, have more life and joy than others, who are chiefly employed in hearing and reading, because the former are nearer the well-head, and have their supplies more immediately from God. We bring our hearts more easily to read and hear than to secret prayer and meditation, because in the former there is more of man, and in the latter we approach the Lord alone; and our natures draw back from the more spiritual duties, though they are the most profitable. When man was first created, God was the joy of his heart, and the daily sweet subject of his thoughts; but sin has stripped us of the spiritual mind, and all delight in God, and communion with Him. It is at enmity with Him, manifested by its aversion to prayer, to the study of his word, and conversation about God. Where the carnal mind *rules*, the soul is *dead*. It is a sure mark of *spiritual death*, and the way to *everlasting death*. There may be good tempers, many good qualities, but still *spiritual death*. The mind assimilates itself to what it thinks much upon, grows more worldly by thinking on worldly things, and more spiritual by thinking on spiritual things. O meditate much upon God, his love, and his word; upon Christ, his grace and free salvation; upon the Holy Spirit and his influences, and your perpetual need of watchfulness.—*Rev. J. Berridge.*

2D MONTH.]

ACTS XXVI. 24.

[9TH DAY.

"PAUL, thou art beside thyself." Many, I fear, think they hit the happy medium, who may, too late, discover their irretrievable and dreadful mistake! If I gave a caution to my heart, it would not be "beware of enthusiasm," but "beware of coldness, deadness, worldliness, and sensuality." As to enthusiasm, I think a man may be called an enthusiast who acts vehemently, and carries matters to excess without a sufficient, or rational motive. We need not, then, wonder that the world, in general, call the really religious, enthusiasts, for they perceive not the inducements to their actions; they are not affected with the shortness of time, the importance of eternity, the love of God, who spared not his only Son, and the excellence of a life of holiness; and they see men despising and disregarding riches, honours, and pleasures, and whatever they hold valuable, without being sensible of their motives. We know that Paul, and our Saviour himself, were said to be mad, by worldly men. They think we make religion far too strict and gloomy; but are we to be thought gloomy because we disparage and dislike what they delight in? Their pleasures are generally absurd and trifling, and frequently accompanied with bitterness; they never are completely satisfied and content. Religion, on the other hand, lays the foundation of lasting cheerfulness and perfect tranquillity.—*Rev. E. Bickersteth.*

2D MONTH.] 1 THESSALONIANS V. 17. [10TH DAY.

"PRAY without ceasing." Keep up daily prayer. Prayer is the bellows that blow up the affections, and a Christian is most active when his affections are most violent. Prayer keeps the trade of religion a-going. Christian, wind up thy heart every day by prayer. It fetcheth in strength from Christ; and when his strength comes in, it sets the soul a-working. When Christians leave off fervency in prayer, then by degrees they lose their holy violence. Again, get under lively preaching. The word is quick and powerful; it puts life into a dead heart: it is a sword to cut down sin, and a spur to quicken grace. It is the oracles of heaven that must animate us. Get your hearts filled with *love* to religion. This will keep you from being weary. A man will be violent for nothing but what he loves. What made St. Paul labour? The love of Christ constrained him. Get love to religion, and you will count those the best hours which are spent with God. Be vigilant; stand upon your watch-tower. Why are Christians so listless in their work, but because they are so careless in their watch? Did they but watch to see how their enemy watcheth, they would be violent to resist him. Did they but watch to see how their time runs, or rather *flies*, they would be violent to redeem it. Did they but watch to see how their hearts loiter in religion, they would spur on faster to heaven. Our *sleeping* time is Satan's *tempting* time.—
Rev. Thomas Watson.

2D MONTH.]

JOSHUA I. 6.

[11TH DAY.

"Be strong." When Joshua is sent forth against the Canaanites, cities walled up to heaven, men of gigantic stature, fighting with chariots armed with scythes, thrice God says, "Be strong." And when a believer goes forth to fight against his enemies, the world, the flesh, and the devil, he needs exhorting to "be strong." But where lies his strength? Adam, when created, was set up with sufficient furniture, and had no need to look out of himself for direction or protection. But he got a fall, and was stripped of all spiritual life, light, and strength. Man is no more to be trusted: how should he stand when all his bones are broken? A Christian's work is to live out of himself, and to live upon Christ. A fulness of grace is lodged in *Him*; and this is to be received by much prayer for the grace, and a confident expectation of it. To *Him*, therefore, let us go for *directing* grace in times of darkness and perplexity; for *quickening* grace, in times of deadness and heaviness; for *supporting* grace, in sickness, pain, or any pressure; for *pardoning* grace, under guilt; for *sanctifying* grace, to make us grow and become meet for heaven; for *restoring* grace, to recover and heal backslidings; for *preserving* grace, to carry us safe to heaven; for *providential* grace, to protect and support our bodies. As the Church's King he has all power in heaven and earth—in all things temporal, spiritual, and eternal.—*Rev. John Berridge.*

2D MONTH.]

MATTHEW VII. 14.

[12TH DAY.

“STRAIT is the gate.” Nothing is more true. Flesh and blood cannot endure it; therefore we must deny ourselves. The divine life is arduous, though *it has enough to repay for all its difficulties*. It is a continual warfare. A life of communion with God is a life of continual self-denial. Our progress in the divine life is the effect of daily striving, watching, and fighting. *Time* must be conscientiously redeemed, the *body* kept under, corruptions daily watched and subdued, the mind continually withdrawn from the world, and the things of the world; every good thought must be cherished, fellowship with God cultivated, and everything which hath any tendency to interrupt it laid aside. But how shall I be able to set my heart fixedly on God? I must more earnestly strive and seek after it; for the Spirit *alone* can do it. It is astonishing how insensible sin hath rendered the heart of man. Were our dependance more upon the *Spirit*, our success against corruptions within, and temptations without, would be more certain and apparent: and in proportion as it is so, we are sure of success, for God will never disappoint us. The truth is, we are not sufficiently convinced, in a practical way, that without the constant influences of the Spirit, we can have no wisdom for work, success under no trial, victory over no temptation, neither peace in any condition.—*Rev. T. Charles.*

2D MONTH.]

1 THESS. V. 21.

[13TH DAY.

"PROVE all things." Alas! the Scriptures assure us that the whole world lieth in wickedness, and every day affords a melancholy proof of this; and we must be content, with Moses, to count the reproach of Christ greater riches than the honours, wealth, and pleasures of this world. The best men have been generally the worst used. Our Saviour was counted a madman, and so was St. Paul. We must indeed live above the world, and count all things but loss for Christ: for he that does not (in heart and spirit, if not actually) forsake all, and sell all, cannot be his disciple. Sincere Christians are often counted the off-scouring of all things,—and this is a cross which we must take up even daily, if called thereto. But let me not be misunderstood; I consider my character as a talent entrusted to my charge, which I should give up to none but the Master who gave it. It is our duty to provide things honest, not only in the sight of God, but in the sight of men also; and we are required to be wise as serpents, whilst we are harmless as doves. These things I desire to keep in view, and daily to pray for that wisdom which cometh from above. "A zeal without knowledge" I allow to be very dangerous; our zeal must be guided by the Scriptures, and daily brought to that test, or it may do much harm; but it is well to be zealously affected in a good cause.—*Rev. E. Bickersteth.*

2D MONTH.]

1 PETER IV. 18.

[14TH DAY.

“IF the righteous scarcely be saved.” Beware of setting up your stay in the *lowest pitch* of grace. It is a pitiful thing to be contented with just so much grace as will keep life and soul together. Weak grace will not withstand strong temptations, or carry through great sufferings. Little grace will not do God much service. It may be said of some Christians, that they are like a ship that comes with much ado to the haven. Labour to grow to *further* degrees of sanctity, and take heed of this opinion: that it is not so *hard* to get the kingdom, and that *less* violence will serve the turn. This hath undone *many*. If it be so easy, what needs Christ say, “Strive as in an agony?” What needed Paul beat down his body? Why did that text speak of taking the kingdom by *force*? Is not conversion called a new birth, a creation? and are these easy? Oh, take heed of fancying that work easy which is both *above* and *against* nature. It is as great a wonder for a soul to be saved as to see a millstone lifted up into the middle region. Remember, you have that corruption within you which is ready to abate this blessed violence. Take heed of *declining* in your affections. You have but a little time to work for God, therefore work the harder. How should you quicken your pace, when you are within sight of the kingdom? Be like the Church of Thyatira,—most violent at last.—*Rev. Thomas Watson.*

2D MONTH.]

REVELATION XXI. 23.

[15TH DAY.

"AND the *Lamb* is the light thereof." As God, so the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, is the glory of the New Jerusalem, and in *his* light the *redeemed* shall have light. For, though Christ shall give up the kingdom to the Father, so that God may be "all in all," and his creatures be fully restored to his favour, and a *healing* government for recovering *lapsed souls* to God shall be no more needed; yet surely He will not cease to be our Mediator,—the Church's Head, and the channel of everlasting light, life, and love to all his members. As "we now live, because He lives," like the branches in the vine; and as the Spirit that now quickens, enlightens, and sanctifies us, is *first* the spirit of *Christ* before it is ours, so will it be in the state of glory. There our union and communion with Him will be *perfected*, not *destroyed*. And as it would be arrogance to think we shall be above the need and use of Christ and his communications, so, I doubt not, we shall ever have use for *one another*, as is plainly intimated by sitting down with "Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of God." It is, I confess, a pleasant thought to me, and greatly helps my willingness to die. Oh, how emboldening to consider that I am to go no untrodden path, nor enter into a solitary, or singular state; but follow all that have passed by death, from the creation to this day, into endless life; "whither," also, "the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec."—*Rev. R. Baxter.*

2D MONTH.]

MATTHEW XI. 12.

[16TH DAY.

"THE violent take it by force." This holy and blessed violence would make Christians *willing to die*. What is it that makes men so loth to die? They are as a tenant that is loth to go out of a house; *why so?* because their conscience accuseth them that they have taken little or no pains for heaven; they have been sleeping, when they should have been working, and now death looks ghastly; they are afraid death will carry them prisoners to hell. Whereas, the Christian who has been active in religion, and has spent his time in the service of God, can look death in the face with comfort. It shall not be a *destruction* but a *deliverance*; it shall purge out sin, and perfect glory. What made St. Paul say, "I desire to depart?" Surely the reason was, he had spent himself for Christ. If anything makes our pillow easy at death, and we go out of the world quietly, it will be this holy violence we have put forth in the business of religion. The saints are said to shine as the stars. Now one star differeth from another star in glory; so that there are gradations of happiness. Of this judgment was Calvin, and many of the ancient fathers. Consider, then, the more work we do for God, the greater will be our reward. Could we hear the souls of the departed speaking to us from heaven, they would say, Pray with more life, act with more zeal; for now we see, the more hath been our labour, the more astonishing is our joy.—*Rev. Thomas Watson.*

2D MONTH.] DEUTERONOMY XXXIII. 9. [17TH DAY.

"NEITHER did he acknowledge his brethren." Take heed of listening to such *friends* as would call you off from this blessed violence. Fire, when in snow, will soon lose its heat, and by degrees go out. Among bad company, you will soon lose your heat for religion. Carnal friends will call it preciseness and singularity. Christ's friends said, "He is beside himself." Such as are unacquainted with the spirituality of religion judge all zeal frenzy. Take heed of a snare in your bosom. This is one of the devil's great subtleties, to hinder us in religion by our nearest relations? Galeacius, being resolved for heaven, what a block in his way did he find *his* carnal relations. Satan tempted Adam by his wife, and handed over a temptation to Job by *his* wife. Who would have suspected the devil there? Spira's friends stood in *his* way to heaven, for advising with them about Luther's doctrine; they persuaded him to recant, and so he felt a hell in his conscience. Beware of such tempters. Resolve to hold on your violence for heaven, though your carnal friends dissuade you. It is better to go to heaven with their hatred, than to hell with their love. It was a saying of St. Jerome, "If my parents, or my wife, should persuade me to deny Christ, I would forsake *all*, and flee to Him."—*Rev. Thomas Watson.*

2D MONTH.]

PHILIPPIANS IV. 4.

[18TH DAY.

"AGAIN, I say, rejoice." Take heed of despondency of spirit. Be serious, but cheerful. He whose spirit is pressed down with sadness, is unfit to go about his work. An uncheerful heart is unfit to pray or praise God. When the strings of a lute are wet it will not put forth any sweet harmony. Such as go drooping under fears and discouragements cannot take the kingdom of heaven by force. When a soldier faints in the field, he soon lets fall his sword. David chides himself out of his melancholy,—he says, "Why art thou disquieted, O my soul? Hope in God." A sad heart makes a dull action. Cheerfulness is like music in battle, it excites a Christian's spirits and makes him quick and lively in duty. What is done with cheerfulness, is done with delight; and the soul flies more swiftly to heaven upon the wings of delight. Again, take heed of a supine, lazy temper. A slothful Christian is like a fearful soldier, that hath a good mind to the plunder, but is loth to storm the castle. Many, instead of *working* out salvation, *sleep* away salvation. God never made heaven a hive for drones. Sloth is a disease apt to grow upon men; then shake it off. A ship that sails slowly, is an easy prey to the pirate, and a sluggish soul is an easy prey to Satan. While men are asleep in sloth, the devil easily destroys them; while "he that watereth, shall be watered also himself."—*Rev. Thomas Watson.*

2D MONTH.]

1. TIMOTHY VI. 12.

[19TH DAY.

“FIGHT the good fight of faith.” Faith is called a fight because it cannot usually be exercised without opposition from unbelief. A fight supposes some antagonist. Till faith is planted in the heart, unbelief has quiet rule; but when sin is felt, unbelief appears. Faith is a *good fight*, for it is engaged in a *good cause*. First, against our inbred foes; secondly, against the world; thirdly, against the wicked one. Engaged under a *good Captain*, who is almighty, full of compassion, always at hand, and has promised to help them that trust in Him. Divine faith is a victorious grace. Many foils it may meet with in the course of the war, but it is sure to conquer at last. Jesus, who is the *author*, will be the *finisher* of it. Sometimes it staggers, but Jesus upholds it; sometimes it is fainting, but Jesus revives it; sometimes it is cowardly, but Jesus emboldens it; sometimes it is beaten out of the field, but Jesus rallies it again. Ebbings of faith are needful sometimes, to keep us humble and prayerful. Hence we may form some good conjecture of those who *have* and those who have *not* this precious faith. Some fall, but where faith is, rise again, saying, “Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy,” and become more watchful. Others fall, and rise no more,—they are not faith-fighters, they let the world, the flesh, and the devil prevail. But those that flee to Jesus, find Him the same “yesterday, to-day, and for ever.”—*Rev. J. Ber-ridge.*

2D MONTH.]

2. TIMOTHY II. 3.

[20TH DAY.

“ENDURE hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.”
 Galling words to sloth. Good wishes, and good resolutions, I believe, ruin *thousands* of souls. They wish and resolve, and then think the work is done. But we must watch, pray, meditate, and offer violence to our sloth and corruptions. We must press boldly to the throne of grace with prayers, supplications, and restless importunities, and then our light shall break forth as the morning. These are the means appointed for the obtaining of peace, joy, and assurance. Without due attention to which I am fully convinced, that neither the one nor the other can ordinarily be attained. Those who obtain their comforts at an easier rate, have the greatest reason to suspect them to be delusive and fallacious; and those who fondly imagine that they are going on in the narrow way without these vigorous exertions, have not, as yet, I fear, trod *one* step in it. Tell me how a man employs his time, whether he be slothful or industrious, and I will tell you what progress he makes in grace. A religion that costs us nothing—no labour, no self-denial, is not worth having. It is the certain ruin of the soul. For you may as soon gather grapes from thorns as enjoy those fruits of the Spirit,—love, joy, and peace,—whilst you live after the flesh: in self-indulgence, sloth, and ease. “Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.”—*Rev. Thomas Charles.*

2D MONTH.] DEUTERONOMY XXIX. 29. [21st DAY.

“SECRET things belong unto the Lord our God.” Take heed of puzzling your thoughts about election. A Christian may think thus: what, shall I take pains? Perhaps I am not elected, and then all my violence is to no purpose. Thus many are taken off from the use of means, and the business of religion is at a stand; whereas no man can justly say he is not elected. It is true some of God’s children *have* said so in temptation; but, as Peter at the transfiguration said, he *knew not what*, so *these* in a temptation. But no man can say on just grounds that he is not elected, unless he can prove that he hath sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost. For any one to assert non-election, is a *sin*, for that which keeps him in sin, must needs be sinful; but this opinion keeps him in sin; it discourageth him from the use of means, and cuts the sinews of all endeavours. Do not, therefore, perplex your thoughts about election: this book is sealed, and no angel can unclasp it. The rule Christians are to go by is God’s *revealed* will, not his *secret*. God’s *revealed* will is that we pray and repent, by this we make our calling sure; and by making our calling sure, we make our election sure. If I find the fruits of obedience in my heart, I may conclude God’s electing love hath shined upon me.—*Rev. Thomas Watson.*

2D MONTH.]

GENESIS L. 20.

[22D DAY.

"God meant it unto good." Thus grace says of everything. It therefore patiently waits the issue. Though God sometimes moves before in the cloud, and sometimes behind in the pillar of fire; yet, in both, grace sees God, and follows Him, and says, "God meant it unto good:" everything moves me forward towards Canaan—the cloud and the pillar lead the same way. We cannot too well consider, nor too firmly believe, that passage, "All things work together for good to them that love God." Whilst the Lord doth not put upon us *more* than we are able to bear, we have no room to complain; and that He *never did*, nor *will* do. His children always stand in absolute need, at that *very* time, of that *very* affliction he sends. It could not be laid aside, nor delayed longer, nor altered for another, without hurt to their souls. God's designs are various in afflictions, either to bring us to repentance for some past sins, or to prevent us from falling into some great snare, or to exercise or strengthen some grace to prepare us for some trying circumstances. It requires more faith and grace to *bear silently and wait patiently* the Lord's pleasure under trials and crosses, than to be *active* for Him in his work. Self may take a considerable part in the one, for by the honour derived from activity, the pride of the old man within is gratified, while nothing but grace can enable and fit us for the other.

—*Rev. Thos. Charles.*

2D MONTH.]

PHILIPPIANS III. 8.

[23D DAY.

"I COUNT all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." My illness gives me stronger hold of two points:—1. God must be brought *near* to be lived on, and fled to. 2. Comfort, to be sensible to my heart, must spring from God's making Himself sensible to me. I must by faith lay hold of God as He became man. If he should restore me again to health, I have determined to study nothing but my Bible. Literature is inimical to spirituality, if it be not kept under with a firm hand. A man ought to call in from *every quarter* whatever may assist him to understand, explain, and illustrate the Bible; but there, in *its* light and life, is all that is good for man. All important truth is *there*; and I feel that no comfort enters sick curtains from any other quarter. My state is an admonition to young men. I have been too much occupied in preparing to live, and too little in living. I have read too much from curiosity, and for mental gratification. I was literary when I should have been active. We trifle too much. Let us do something for God. I feel, and would urge with all possible strength on others, that Jesus Christ is our all in all. Distress, poverty, reproach, infirmity are fine things to humble a high spirit. The physicians do not know my case; but *I do—it is the finger of God*; and I am to learn from it the sufficiency of his grace.—*Rev. Richard Cecil.*

2d MONTH.]

JOHN III. 5.

[24TH DAY.

“EXCEPT a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” Will you slumber all your days? How much time have you lost that might have been pleasantly spent in a course of godliness? If you *now* begin not to live to God, when will you? Will you defer till you die? Have you any hope that God will deal in a way with *you* differently from all men, and make the other world the place of your *first heart-change*? How dismal should it be to you to look in and still find your heart *dead* towards God, and the things of God; so that you have no *delight* in them. What will thy sobriety, thy justice, thy charity signify, if thou *hast* these to glory in, while thou art habitually disaffected to thy God? Let men value you for these, to whom thereby thou showest some respect. Commune with thyself. Dost thou not *tremble* that thou mayest truly say, “I can delight in creatures, but not in God?” Is it not then to be concluded, from his own express word, that thou art not worthy of Him? Nay, wouldest thou be content to carry the plain sense of thy heart written on thy forehead, and to proclaim that thou accountest thy friends, and this vanishing world, better than God? “What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”—*Rev. John Howe.*

2D MONTH.]

JOHN XV. 5.

[25TH DAY.

"WITHOUT *me* ye can do nothing." We are apt to consider sanctification a separate work from justification, following after it, and wholly independent of it, whereas they seem to be connected works, and inseparable from each other, one resulting from the other. If we desire to be holy, we must seek to be happy in the Saviour's love, must seek to keep a clear view of our adoption. As our views of Christ are more cloudy and discouraging, our bosoms will be more barren of heavenly tempers. A man may be *constitutionally* kind as the spaniel, meek as the lamb, and cheerful as the lark; but these are not *sanctification*. No sanctifying graces are found but from the Cross. Is not this intimated by St. John—"Forthwith came thereout blood and water." Labour to get your conscience sprinkled every day with the atoning blood, and sanctification will ensue of course: the blood and water flow together. When sanctification is considered as a separate work from justification, by and by it is considered as a justifying work itself. Whereas, if they are inseparably connected, and both pardon and holiness spring from the blood of the Cross, the root of merit is dug up thereby, and Christ is *all in all*. I believe experienced Christians make the blood and water flow together.—*Rev. J. Berridge.*

2D MONTH.] 1 CORINTHIANS II. 14, 15. [26TH DAY.

"THE natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God : " "but he that is spiritual, judgeth all things." *Nature and grace* view everything very differently, whether they be things of earth or things of heaven. *Nature* cleaves fast to the earth, looks no higher, and expects all her enjoyment and delight from the earth and earthly things. *Grace* leaves the earth, soars on high, seeks and desires high, holy, and eternal things. *Nature* expects too much from temporal things : it paints a paradise, swells with expectations of high enjoyment in the possession of some terrestrial good, but meets with nothing except disappointment, shame, and sorrow in the end. *Grace* endues the mind with that wisdom that cometh from above, and teacheth us to see the emptiness, the vanity, and the fading nature of all things here below. Experience shows that all things under the sun only appear for a little while, then vanish away, and are no more. The dearest objects of nature die, disappoint our expectations, and leave us to mourn the loss. Not so the objects of faith ; they are true and durable, real and eternal ; they never disappoint our hopes, nor sink our minds in shame. We must look forward to those eternal hills, where we hope shortly to arrive, and abide for ever. To be ready for that happy country is no trifling concern. Walking with God, and keeping the heavenly land in view, is the only safe and happy way for us to take, in travelling through the wilderness. To walk with God *here* is the way to rest with Him for ever.—*Rev. Thomas Jones.*

2D MONTH.]

JOHN XXI. 17.

[27TH DAY.

"LOVEST thou me?" All agree that the religion which will not get us to heaven, is of no use to us. What is true religion, but the heart turning from everything to God? If your *heart* is denied to God, had you all knowledge, and all faith, you must die. If you were so charitable as to give all your goods to feed the poor, you must go to hell if your *heart* is not set upon Christ. Nay, if you give your body to be burned for your religion, and love not the Lord Christ, you perish eternally. This is the grand point every one should look to. It is not some transient affection. Jesus must be Lord of the heart: short of this, and you are short of what will carry you to heaven. How can we possibly go after Christ if the heart is in the world? There may be a profession, an appearance, but if our affections are glued to anything here, we shall soon turn back. If a man does not die to the world, he is not alive to God. Lot's wife bid fair to escape, but she never reached Zoar. Why? *Her heart was in Sodom.* Another class are discouraged in the day of tribulation; there ends *their* religion. They began without any fixed principle, so they cannot stand storms. But the Christian knows who he has trusted his soul with: his heart is fixed; he is built upon a rock. Without knowing Christ so as to give your heart to Him, your religion will not stand. "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him."—*Rev. Thomas Jones.*

2D MONTH.]

JOHN III. 7.

[28TH DAY.

"YE *must* be born again." Our spiritual nature must be *changed*, or we shall be disqualified for inhabiting the New Jerusalem. But some, perhaps, will say, "does not *death* effect this change? If we be not fit *now*, will not *death* make us fit?" My dear brethren, there can be no greater misconception than this. Death will not operate any change in the spiritual and moral character of him who is its subject. Death *transfers*, it does not *transform* the soul. It presents a man before God just as he dies; it does not present him before God different from what it finds him. In other words, death does not form a new character; it merely *fixes* that which we have acquired upon earth. Do not, therefore, deceive yourselves with the delusion—for it is a *gross* delusion—that death will transform you, as by a magic touch, into the likeness of God. As you are when death visits you in time, so will you be when you appear before God in eternity. If death finds you unsanctified, with hearts the scenes of corrupt and conflicting passions, then all that death does is to usher you, so furnished, into the presence of your final Judge; and the sentence of that Judge will be, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is unholy, let him be unholy still." This world is simply a process of preparation for that which is to come. Our character becomes here, what it will for ever be.—*Rev. J. Cumming.*

2D MONTH.]

PSALM XXXII. 11.

[29TH DAY.

"BE glad in the Lord, and rejoice ye righteous." The Christian's life is a happy life. The miseries we feel come not from our Christianity, but from our want of it. When we begin to feel unhappy, it is then we have begun to let go the recollection of the truth as it is in Jesus. Whenever the unhappy fit comes upon you, open the page of the New Testament, read the bright promises, remember that the music from these golden harps is for *you*, and hear a voice sounding from the midst of it, "Let not your hearts be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. I will not leave you orphans, I will come again unto you, and receive you unto myself." And "if ye ask anything in my name, I will do it." We walk with Christ, not as victims with an avenger, not as slaves with a tyrant, not as the vanquished with their conqueror, but as sons with the father, brethren with an elder brother, friends with the Friend that sticketh even closer than a brother. And such a walk, with all its stumblings, its shadows, its short-comings, must be in the main a joyful and a happy walk. Do not forget that one of the great ends of Christianity is to make men happy, to irradiate the sick-bed with new beauty, the grave with new lustre, and to make you feel that nothing can separate you from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus.—*Rev. J. Cumming.*

2D MONTH.]

2 TIMOTHY II. 1.

[30TH DAY.

"**BE strong** in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." Those who are not making progress in holiness are dubious characters. The work of grace is compared to light, shining more and more unto the perfect day. It is also called a race, or continual drawing nearer to the land of promise. He that sits down satisfied, and says, "I am a Christian"—*I doubt it*. The grand mark of a Christian is a thirsting, a pressing on to be what God requires. He that is hearty in the work, considers that he has done *very little* as yet: he says, "I am getting to the close of my journey, and am doing next to nothing." If the heart is given to God, we shall be pressing on for *more* enjoyment of Him. I cannot believe you when you tell me you have given your heart to the Lord, if you do not make haste to go to Him. You do press after the things you greatly desire. If your work is a burden, you do not love your Master or his work. I do not mean that the real Christian has no variety of frames; but one thing is abiding—his soul is ever looking oneway; whether travelling fast or slow, his face is ever towards God. But if the man is wavering, his religion may last just while the alarm is upon him; but he has never quarrelled with sin; he is not fit for the kingdom of heaven, he shall not be seen there. Demas was as zealous a man as any in the company, but his heart never really came out of the world; therefore he left Paul, he left Christ, he turned back where his heart was. "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life."—*Rev. Thomas Jones*.

2D MONTH.]

1 PETER I. 16.

[31ST DAY.

"Be ye holy, for I am holy." Holiness is not a mere preparation for heaven; it is heaven; it is of the essence of salvation; it is happiness; it is joy. How unfounded is the charge we sometimes hear adduced against the distinctive and blessed doctrine of justification by faith alone in the righteousness of Christ, that it leads to immorality! The Word of God, and every faithful expounder of it, insist as strongly on fitness for the presence of God as on a title to the rewards of glory. Forgiveness of sin, through the shed blood and perfect sacrifice of the Son of man, is not a substitute for holiness, but the removal of an obstruction to its growth, development, and progress. We insist on holiness of nature, not simply as evidence of faith, but as the essence of the happiness into which believers will be admitted. The unsanctified are not in the number of the justified. The new state into which reconciliation brings us is the birth-place of a new heart. Forgiven much, we love much: for love is the fulfilling of the law, the germ of holiness, the nutriment of it, the spring of its highest attainments. We have an ear open to all the commands of God, and the highest requirements fall gently on the heart of him who has been taught to love God as his great Benefactor, his reconciled Father in Christ Jesus. "Be ye holy, for I am holy,"—*Rev. J. Cumming.*

3d MONTH.]

2 TIMOTHY III. 5.

[1st DAY.

"FROM such turn away." I offer some powerful motives to determine you from looking back to Sodom. Look back to the world, after you have received a kingdom! What you left are dying things, shadows, dreams. Onward! onward! let nothing allure you. What have you gained by choosing Christ? Everything. What folly to want the shadow, when you have the substance. Strive to get your heart away from everything but Jesus; fix your affections on things above. Temptations are strong, and Satan is busy. You have a character to take care of, ye that are born of God. To cloud your evidences also is no trifle. You injure the religion of Christ by a worldly spirit. Pray every step of your path, "Lord, hold me up; carry me through; keep me close to thee." For there are many now-a-days, like Ananias and Sapphira, who keep back a part: *part* of the heart; *part* of the mind; *part* of the affections; *part* of the talents: it will not do. I do not believe that any sinner shall be seen in the kingdom of Christ, who has not given up everything he is and has. If you have not devoted your whole self to God, I doubt that religion. You may live in a loose kind of profession of religion, seven, ten, or twenty years, but where is the *heart*? Christianity makes a grand distinction. The man lives for a different purpose—to please his God. I do not say the believer is perfect, but he is one who can say, "To me, to live is Christ;" *he lives for Christ*, not for self,—however things may go, whatever he may suffer, this is his aim.—*Rev. Thomas Jones.*

3D MONTH.]

REVELATION XXII. 11.

[2D DAY,

"HE that is righteous, let him be righteous still." How intimate is the connexion that subsists between time and eternity. Time is the twilight of an everlasting noon to come, or of an everlasting night to fall. As the one is, the other will be. Influences which are received every day by all of us, gentle in their approach, but mighty in their action, are leaving effects behind which will be felt for ever. Death, which ends time, and begins eternity, is not the arrest or alteration of our course, but the continuance of it. If our character be righteous and holy *now*, it will advance in the same direction for ever. How great is the importance which this consideration stamps on all we say and do! We are building up an immortal nature; we are accepting impulses before which we shall move for ever; we are imbibing influences and hues fixed as our being. For heaven, or hell; for happiness, or misery, all things are preparing us, and every step is taking us. Habit is the act of yesterday added to the act of to-day. What we *shall* be is just what we *are*; and the difference is purely in degree. By this test we may try all the employments and pleasures of life,—what influence do they leave on us? What is the nature and amount of the impression they leave behind? Thus we shall look on this world in the light of the upper, and render it subservient to higher and more enduring things. If holiness be the very essence of heaven, how earnestly should we desire it! how fervently pray for it!—*Rev. Dr. Cumming.*

3D MONTH.]

PSALM IV. 6.

[3D DAY.

"WHO will show us any good?" What meaneth this restlessness of our nature? what meaneth this unceasing activity, which longs for exercise and employment, even after every object is gained which first roused it to enterprise? What mean these immeasurable longings which no gratification can extinguish, and which still agitate the heart of man, even in the fulness of plenty and enjoyment? If they mean anything at all, they mean that all which the world can offer is not enough to fill up his capacity for happiness; that time is too small for him, and he is born for something beyond it; that the scene of his earthly existence is too limited, and he is formed to expatiate in a wider and grander theatre; that a noble destiny is reserved for him; and that to accomplish the purpose of his being, he must soar above the littleness of this world, and aim at a loftier prize. It forms the peculiar honour and excellence of religion, that it accommodates itself to this property of our nature; that it hold out a prize suited to our high calling; that there is a grandeur in its objects which can fill and surpass the imagination; that it dignifies the present scene by connecting it with eternity; that it reveals to the eye of faith the glory of an imperishable world: and how, from the eminence of heaven, a cloud of witnesses are looking down upon earth, not as a scene for the petty anxieties of time, but as a splendid theatre, for the ambition of immortal spirits.—*Dr. Chalmers.*

3d MONTH.]

MATTHEW XIV. 23.

[4TH DAY.

"HE went up into a mountain *apart* to pray." Nothing can supply the want of private converse with God. However agreeable and edifying the conversation of Christian friends, yet we must deny ourselves therein, if it encroaches too much on the time usually dedicated to meditation and private prayer; or we shall in the end be great losers. This is the life and soul of every other duty: and when it is neglected the soul must be stupid, barren, and sapless. None but God can always satisfy, and here only are we out of danger of excess. And the more we converse with Him, the better fitted are we to converse with our fellow-creatures. When we have received out of his fulness, we have wherewith to communicate to others; otherwise we are nothing but emptiness, and there can be no edification. It is in retirement that our languid graces are revived, our affections raised to God, and our souls refreshed and quickened by the influences of the Holy Spirit. If we would live near the threshold of heaven, and daily take a glance of our promised inheritance, we must avoid not only worldly but religious dissipation. "Enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret." "Commune with your own heart, upon your bed, and be still."—*Rev. Thomas Charles.*

3D MONTH.]

ROMANS VIII. 6.

[5TH DAY.

"To be carnally-minded is death." Death will not operate any change in our character. This world is simply a process of preparation for that which is to come. It has been well said that, "It is a solemn thing to die;" it is a *more* solemn thing to live. Things that perish as they pass, leave an eternal impress upon us behind them. Not an event we have heard of, not a company we mix with, not a book we read, not a sermon we hear, fails to leave on us an influence that shall become only more clear, vivid, and legible, through the cycles of an endless heaven, or the epochs of an everlasting hell. Mind is then and there stereotyped—character is then made a fixture; and as a man is found at his decease, so will he either be found *disqualified* for that citizenship above; or, what is unspeakably blessed, *qualified* and *fitted* for it by God's Holy Spirit. In holy character, I believe, are mines of precious wealth, springs of refreshment, elements of joy, out of which holy and happy men are built up for ever; there will be the impulse of endless development, expansion, and progress; and at each stage of this development will be tasted the richest joys of the saved. As we sow, so shall we reap. There will be likewise an eternal echo to every evil action; and conscience, like a whispering-gallery, will send it back (if unrepented of,) multiplied for *ever* in crashes of thunder, in reverberations of remorse and righteous retribution.—*Rev. Dr. Cumming.*

3D MONTH.]

2 CORINTHIANS VI. 10.

[6TH DAY.

"As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing." How favourable to mourners is the blessed Gospel! Gaze not on the dark side of the cloud, the sable dispensation is tinged with radiant beams of the Sun of Righteousness, and portends a glorious coming day. It matters not much whether burdens be lessened or increased, if strength be in exact proportion; and He who cannot lie has said, "As thy day is thy strength shall be." In the meantime we are called to walk by faith, not by sight; and He in whom we confide all things hath said, "All things work together for good:" and the thought once reconciled me in great trouble, that afflictions are compared to workmen, all employed and busy in the Christian's behalf. They work *for* you,—it might have been *against* you, as is often feared. They work *together*, not *separately*, but in happy harmony. I then thought, the more the better, if God direct them; for the end to be accomplished is a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. As men rejoice in industrious servants, so the Christian may rejoice not only in the Lord, but in tribulation also. If God send a great affliction (thought I), we may view it as a fresh workman, engaged in our favour; and not only so, but look upon it as one who will, being gifted with singular strength, dispatch the work, though difficult, at great pace: thus they for whom they work will grow rich at last. Among other graces, let patience have her perfect work. She is a pensive, but a *precious* grace.—*Rev. Robert Hall.*

3D MONTH.]

1 CORINTHIANS III. 19.

[7TH DAY.

"THE wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." There are no greater objects of pity in the world than men who are admired by all around for their nice discernment and fine taste in everything of a worldly nature, but have no taste for the riches that endure for ever. A spiritual man is a character that rises far above all worldly wisdom and science. He is described by our Lord as born of the Spirit. Spiritual senses are given to him. He has a spiritual *taste*, that rejects whatever is injurious, and gladly receives whatever is salutary to the spiritual life. He desires the sincere milk of the Word. He has a spiritual *sight*. He looks not at the things that are seen and temporal, but at the things which are *not* seen, and eternal. He has a spiritual *ear*. My sheep hear my voice. He lives in a world of his own; he is tried by spiritual conflicts, and supported by spiritual comforts. If the things of *God* do not afford him consolation, he droops, and nothing in this world can lift up his head: he will say to every other object, "Miserable comforters are ye all." He is pursuing a spiritual end, and while others boast, and are puffed up with their great attainments, he is humbled in the dust, and gives all glory to God. The Pharisee is become a Publican; he seems to say, "Is any man groaning under a body of sin and death? This is *my* case also: if I have anything wherein to glory, it is in Christ Jesus."—*Rev. Richard Cecil.*

3D MONTH.]

1 CORINTHIANS XII. 11.

[8TH DAY.

"ALL these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will." There are different ways of doing the same thing, and that with success and acceptance. We see this in the Apostles themselves, and ought not to judge one another. But while Peter says, "Our beloved brother Paul writes according to the wisdom given unto him," there are Peters in our days who would say, "Paul is too learned. Away with these things which are hard to be understood : he should be more simple. I dislike all this reasoning." And there are Pauls who would say, "Peter is rash and unguarded ; he should put a curb on his impetuosity." And there are Johns who would say, "They should both discharge their office in *my* soft, winning manner. No good will come of this fire and noise." *Nothing of the sort.* *Each* has his proper gift of God, and *each* seems only desirous to occupy faithfully until his Master come.

They watch for souls, for which the Lord
Did heavenly bliss forego,
For souls which must for ever live,
In happiness or woe.
May they that Saviour whom they preach,
Their own Redeemer, see ;
And watch Thou daily for *their* souls,
That they may watch for *Thee*.

Rev. R. Cecil.

3d MONTH.]

MATTHEW XXV. 46.

[9TH DAY.

“AND these shall go away into everlasting punishment ; but the righteous into life eternal.” It is an awful thing to defer preparation for so vast a change as death, to the last hours of life ; to leave an eternity of happiness or misery to depend upon the right employment of a few moments. To stand on the brink of two eternities ; to know that a few moments will bring us to that country where change is impossible, and where the difference is so vast as, inexpressible torment and woe, or inexpressible happiness and joy ; to hear the words, “Depart ye cursed !” or “Come ye blessed !”. Can anything be more awful ? Oh, then, what would we give to be assured we were going to a known friend, who had prepared the way for us ; to an Advocate, whose plea is unanswerable. A death-bed will put things in their true light. “And these shall go away into everlasting punishment ; but the righteous into life eternal.”

From that insatiable abyss,
Where flames devour, where Satan is,
Oh, save, and bring me to thy bliss ;
Give to my ransom'd soul a place
Among thy chosen, right-hand race,
The sons of God, and heirs of grace.

Rev. E. Bickersteth.

3D MONTH.]

EPHESIANS I. 4.

[10TH DAY.

"HE hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world." Two things are stated with equal clearness in the Word of God—sovereignty and responsibility. They seem opposed to each other, but I adore in silence. I see man *must* be accountable, or he could not be judged. I am no less satisfied that if he be not secured by Divine interference, no flesh could be saved.—*Anon.*

Controversy upon this subject does no good. The attempt to remove some difficulties has often created more. There is no rest to the mind except in the argument which Paul uses: "Who art thou that repliest against God?" The facts are evident, clearly stated in Scripture, and clearly exemplified in the world. To account for them by any metaphysical reasoning is beyond the power and the province of man. The same difficulties on the subject present themselves to the philosopher as to the Christian, and that in an equal degree. Our wiser plan is to keep strictly to God's Word; to try to reconcile things which we do not comprehend, is to darken counsel, and to create greater embarrassments.

*Grace first contrived the way
To save rebellious man;
And all the steps that grace display,
Which drew the wondrous plan.*

Rev. Thomas Jones.

3D MONTH.]

ZECHARIAH I. 5.

[11TH DAY.

"YOUR fathers, where are they?" Surely He who made the human breast well knew how best to touch the springs by which its sympathies are opened, when He asked the affecting question, "Your fathers, where are they?" Has not the grave even now closed over them? Are they so early called away, and have you no desire, when God shall take you hence, to follow them? If the Word of God can awaken no *spiritual* feeling within your breast, can it also touch no *natural* chord that lies responsive there? Have you never so loved one earthly being whom God has taken to himself before you, that you would rejoice in the thought of seeing that object of your affection at God's right hand? Here, then, is a motive, and comparatively low and selfish though it be, we would leave untried no motive which may win you to your own eternal happiness; which may plant you as a jewel in your Redeemer's crown. If there be those to whom you would desire to be re-united in the realms of bliss, oh, delay not, trifle not with this great salvation. Come, all sinful though you be, in penitence and faith to the Saviour of your soul; He invites you, He urges you, He entreats you, by every hope of present pardon and of future blessedness, to come unto Him that your soul may live.—*Rev. H. Blunt.*

3D MONTH.]

PSALM XXXVII. 18.

[12TH DAY.

"THE Lord knoweth the days of the upright." Have they days of affliction? He knows them,—knows their source, their pressure, how long they have continued, the support they require, and the proper time to remove them. Have they days of inaction? when they are laid aside from their work by accident or disease. He knows them; and says under every prevention, "It is well that it was in thine heart." Have they days of privation, when they are denied the ordinances of religion, after seeing his power and glory in the temple? He knows them; and will follow his people when they cannot follow Him, and be a little sanctuary to them. Have they days of declension, infirmities, and age? He knows them; and says, "I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth. . . . Even to old age I am He, and to hoar hairs will I carry you." He knows the days of the upright; He knows their number; He has *appointed* them; friends cannot enlarge, enemies cannot reduce them. Whenever they die they have fulfilled their days, and are immortal till their work is done.

Crosses and changes are their lot
Long as they sojourn here;
But since their Saviour changes not,
What have the saints to fear?

Rev. W. Jay.

3D MONTH.] 1 CORINTHIANS III. 21, 22. [13TH DAY.

"ALL things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; *all are yours.*" I envy no quality of the mind, or intellect in others, nor genius, power, wit, or fancy; but if I could choose what would be most delightful, and I believe most useful to me, I should prefer a firm religious belief to every other blessing, for it makes life a discipline of goodness; creates new hopes, when all earthly hopes vanish; and throws over the decay, the destruction of existence, the most gorgeous of all lights; awakens life in death, and from corruption and decay, calls up beauty and divinity; makes an instrument of torture and of shame a ladder of ascent to paradise; and far above all combinations of earthly hopes, calls up the most delightful visions of palms and amaranths, the gardens of the blest, the security of everlasting joys, where the sensualist and the sceptic only view gloom, decay, annihilation, and despair.

How vast the treasures we possess;
How rich thy bounty, King of Grace!
This world is ours, and worlds to come,
Earth is our lodge, and heaven our home!

Sir Humphrey Davy.

3D MONTH.]

2 CORINTHIANS XIII. 5.

[14TH DAY.

“**EXAMINE** yourselves.” Are we in our inmost hearts conscious of a great change that has passed upon us, without which we cannot see the kingdom of God? Is it not strange that we leave no question upon earth unsettled except the most momentous question of all? Is it not strange that there is nothing in politics, nothing in science, nothing in literature, nothing in news, nothing in astronomy, nothing in geography, that we do not like to know; but *this* question, “Am I a child of God, or am I still in the flesh?” is a question which we leave undetermined? Is it not a fact, that if you speak of poetry men’s countenances will glow? if you speak of politics, they will instantly enter into it? if you speak of trade, commerce, merchandise, they will discuss every point connected with them eloquently and readily? But the instant you speak to a man of that question which ought to absorb every other, his countenance instantly falls; he says practically that religion is a thing for the church, for a funeral, for a sick-bed. Oh, what a grievous mistake! The reception of the Gospel of Jesus into your hearts would sanctify every trial, give emphasis to every happy beating of your heart, make you not only holier men, but what you never otherwise could have been, perfectly *happy* men.—*Dr. Cumming.*

3D MONTH.]

REVELATION III. 11.

[15TH DAY.

"THAT no man take thy crown." You that are noble aspire to this crown. Worthless business detains many of us. Arise, immortal souls, from turmoiling in the dust, and working in the clay like Egyptian captives. There is a Redeemer come that will rescue you from such vile service, for more excellent employment. It is strange how the souls of *Christians* can so much forget their first original from heaven, and their new hopes of returning thither, and the rich price of their redemption; and forgetting all these dwell so low, and doat so much on trifles. Arise and satiate the eye of faith with the contemplation of Christ's beauty. And you, others that never yet saw Him, arise and admire his matchless excellency. His brightness, if you saw it, would obscure to you the greatest splendour of the world. Stand up from the dead, and He shall give you light. Happy are they who arise early in the morning of their *youth*; for the day of life is very short, and the art of Christianity long and difficult. Is it not a grievous thing, that men never consider why they came into the world till they be upon the point of going out again; nor think how to live, till they be summoned to die! But most of all, unhappy, he that never wakens out of that pleasing dream of false happiness, till he fall into eternal misery. Arise, then, betimes, and prevent this sad awakening. All the world is one great impertinency to him who contemplates God, and his Son Jesus Christ.—*Archbishop Leighton.*

3D MONTH.]

REVELATION VII. 13. "

[16TH DAY.

"WHAT are these?" Is it wonderful that the redeemed from among men are to be exalted in glory above all the angels of God? It might be wondered at if God had not redeemed them at so great a price. Angels cost Christ comparatively little; the saints that are gathered from among men cost Him all that He had to give. He spoke, and angels were created in strength and beauty; He bowed his head in agony and died, that man might be redeemed. Since the price of redemption was so great, no wonder that the glory of the redeemed is to be greater than all other creature glory. "Who are *these*?" and "whence came *they*?" They will be the objects of wonder and admiration in heaven—all so *bright*, so *near* the throne: so like the Son of God. A hope so great, and so Divine,—Oh, let the yearnings of your heart (amidst the yearnings of affection towards those with whom we have to part for a season,) be *most* deep and tender for Him who loved you with a love stronger than death. Vain world, away! Thou art a mockery of our hopes! Rend, ye heavens, and give us back our Lord! Open, and let us in to our incorruptible inheritance. These are drowsy times. We need to watch and be sober, for there is an opiate power in the atmosphere of this world. At length we shall see Him revealed in his glory. "Behold, He cometh with clouds." What a sight; what greeting; what joy! He is our friend, do we not long to be with Him? We must wait with patience, but still remembering that the spirit which keeps us from saying, "Come quickly!" is not patience, but want of love, fervent love to Jesus.—*Rev. W. H. Hewitson.*

3D MONTH.]

REVELATION XIV. 4.

[17TH DAY.

"THEY follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth." This was their practice on earth—this is their reward in heaven. The two are so connected, that without the one we can never attain the other. They follow Him, first, in the end and object of his life. What is it that you specially contemplate as the great end you are seeking to attain? Our Lord, all the time of his sojourn on earth, sought to do the will of God: and if we are washed in his blood, we shall endeavour to imitate his example. They follow Christ also in the *great standard* to which He appealed. You must bring *everything* to the test of the Bible. The instant you go out of it for the solution of a religious question, you are upon Popish ground; but when you appeal to it *alone*, you are on Protestant ground, and *God will teach you*. Then they follow Christ in his intercourse with the world. He has said, "Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." Hence, the result of the Gospel will be, that the grace of God will separate you from the world: or, the world, understanding your character, will separate itself from you. They follow Christ *with the heart*. They likewise follow Him *openly*. No Christian goes to heaven by *stealth*. *Boldly* to confess Christ is his *first duty*. And we must follow Christ *fully* and *constantly*, not by fits and starts. Following Him thus in all the places where He beckons them upon earth, at length they mingle with the hundred forty and four thousand, who celebrate his praise upon his throne.—*Dr. Cumming*.

3D MONTH.]

PSALM CVII. 7.

[18TH DAY.

"HE led them by the right way." In this men readily deceive themselves, they can do anything well in *imagination*, better than the *real task* that is in their hands. They presume that they could do God good service in some place of command, that serve him not as becomes, in that which is by far the easier, the place of *obeying*, wherein *He hath set them*. They think that if they had the ability and opportunities that some men have, they would do much more for religion and for God, than they do ; and yet do nothing, but spoil a far lower part than that which is their own, and is given them to study and act aright in. But our folly and self-ignorance abuses us ; it is not our part to choose what we should be, but to be what we are to his glory, that gives us to be such. Be thy condition never so mean, yet thy conscience towards God, if it be within thee, will find itself work in that. There is no pill so bitter, but respect and love to God will sweeten it. And this is a very great refreshment to the Christian in any mean estate, that he may say, "Lord, this is the station wherein thou hast set me in this world, and I desire to serve thee in it. What I do is for *thee*, and what I suffer I desire to bear patiently and cheerfully for thy sake, in submission and obedience to thy will." Our bodies are to be presented a *living sacrifice*, and they are not that without our *hearts* and *souls*.—*Archbishop Leighton*.

3D MONTH.]

1 JOHN II. 15.

[19TH DAY.

"LOVE not the world." It is not an easy matter to be *drawn* from, nor to be *beaten* from, the love of this world; and this is what God mainly requires of his children, that they be not in love with the world, nor the things of it; for that is contrary to the love of God; and so far as *that* is entertained, *this* is wanting. And if in the midst of afflictions they are sometimes subject to this disease, how would it grow upon them with ease and prosperity! When they are beaten from one worldly folly or delight, they are ready, through nature's corruption, to lay hold upon some other, and therefore there must be somewhat to drive them from that too. Thus it is clear there is need, yea, *great* need, of many afflictions, that the saints be chastened by the Lord, that they may not be condemned with the world. Happy indeed the stones that God chooses to be living stones in his spiritual temple, though they be hammered and hewed, to be polished for it, by afflictions, and the inward work of repentance. This is a truth if there be any in religion—that they who are not made saints in the estate of grace, shall never be saints in glory. The stones which are appointed for that glorious temple above are hewn, and polished, and prepared for it here, as the stones were wrought and prepared in the mountains for building the temple at Jerusalem.—*Archbishop Leighton.*

3D MONTH.]

PSALM XL. 17.

[20TH DAY.

"I AM poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon me." To the natural man, it may be enough to account for disease, by assigning this or that other physical cause; but the child of God finds himself at *school* under the tuition of his Father, and he seeks to know the purpose of the Father's heart in administering discipline and chastisement. How kind it is in God to think of us, and to chasten us! When we are afflicted by Him, we ought to know that we are in his heart. We may say then, "I am poor and needy, but the Lord thinketh upon me." Am I in the dark? "God is my light;" then why should I be afraid? Have I sinned? "There is forgiveness with Thee;" then why should I despair? Do I wander in a wilderness where there is no way? "I will guide thee with mine eye;" then why should I be perplexed and anxious? Am I borne down by strong corruption? It is written, "Sin shall not have dominion over you." Am I poor? "Buy of me gold tried in the fire that thou mayest be rich." Am I weak? "Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is perfected in weakness." Am I troubled, afflicted with pain, beset with temporal ills? "I am persuaded that nothing can separate me from the love that is in Christ Jesus." "I am poor and needy, yet the Lord *thinketh* upon me."—*Rev. W. H. Hewitson.*

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3D MONTH.]

PSALM CVIII. 1.

[21ST DAY.

"O God, my heart is fixed." Oh! the blessed choice of that soul that is still seeking *more* "love to God;" *more* affection and *more* ability to do Him service; that counts all days and hours for *lost* that are not employed to this improvement; that hears the Word in public and reads it in private, for this purpose, to kindle this love, or to blow the spark, if any there be already in the heart; to raise it to a clear flame, and from a little flame to make it burn yet hotter, and purer, and rise higher. Though there can be no accession of gain to Him by our services, yet He is pleased so to account with us, as if there were. Therefore we may urge, "Lord, give more." Labour for a *fixed* heart. If it be refined from creature-love, and self-love; spirituality, and love of God, will fix it, and then shall it be fit to praise, which an unstable, uncomposed heart can never be, any more than an instrument can be harmonious and fit to play on, that hath loose pins, still slipping and letting down the strings—pins that never fasten. And thus are the most; they cannot fix to divine thoughts, to consider God, to behold and admire his excellency and goodness, and his free love. Oh! that happy word of David, worthy to be twice repeated—when shall we say it?—"O God, my heart is *fixed*." Well might he add, "I will sing and give praise." Oh! that we would pray much that He would fix our hearts; and then He, having fixed them, we should praise Him much.—*Archbishop Leighton.*

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3D MONTH.]

PHILIPPIANS II. 12.

[22D DAY.

"WORK out your own salvation." Whatever God does, is done by man's instrumentality; whatever man does, is done by God's power. Work, then, believers, as if your sanctification were dependant exclusively on your own working; and, meanwhile, give God all the glory, for it is no power but *his* that gives prosperity or good effect to your endeavours. "Work out your own salvation," not because every or anything at all hangs on your own strength; but "work it out," says the text, for "it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do." Let not the thought that He is mightily engaged in the work of your sanctification, betray you into a careless or slothful use of means, for such are the arrangements of Divine wisdom, that sloth and carelessness on your part will inevitably arrest the ongoing of the work. Up, therefore, and be doing! There is no time for sloth or drowsiness. The talents of your Lord have been committed to your trust and stewardship; you must give them out to usury or trade with them, that when He comes and calls you to a reckoning you may be able to restore Him his own with increase. These are true proverbs:—"He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand; but the hand of the diligent maketh rich. The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing; but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat." But beware of attaching any *merit* to your own doings, lest it work as a deadly poison within you, and kill your peace. Remember, that for *justification*, you have no work to do.—*Rev. W. H. Hewitson.*

3D MONTH.]

REVELATION XIX. 8.

[23D DAY.

"To her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white." There is everything that is wonderful in the Church of Christ. She is wonderful in her *origin*; she is a king's daughter, heaven is her native country; she descends from above, for she is *born* from above. She is glorious in her *apparel*; she is arrayed in white garments, made white in the blood of the Lamb. She is extraordinary in her *diet*; the whole world cannot afford anything for her to eat; it must come from heaven. No less will satisfy her than the bread of God. She is peculiar, also, in her *language*. Let a believer tell a worldly man of the things he has experienced, and he will no more understand him than if he spoke in Arabic. The Church is singular also in her *choice*; she chooses not the pleasure and vanities of this world; she prefers waiting for her inheritance: the whole world cannot satisfy one of the least of God's children. There is no such ambition as that which animates the heart of a Christian. No portion will satisfy her short of God. The Church also is wonderful in her *courage*; the weakest of her pilgrims have courage enough to subdue kingdoms, to go through fire and water; yea, they will stick at nothing that stands between them and their Beloved.—
Rev. Thomas Jones.

3D MONTH.] DEUTERONOMY XXXII. 10. [24TH DAY.

"HE found him in a *desert land*." Where is the Church now? She is in the wilderness; but she will not be there long. What is the earth to heaven but a wilderness? In travelling through it, the believer often finds himself entangled amongst its thorns and briars, and he grieves much in consequence. Earthly affections and earthly cares impede his progress to his heavenly home. 'Tis a pity we should be obliged to make the confession, but so it is; and many are the deep groans of the pilgrim on account of it. Our views, too, are often much bewildered: we find that we are, in this respect, in the wilderness, and have not that clear view of eternal things which we long for. Oh! beware, believer, of getting your affections entangled with the things of earth. I do ask, Can they afford you one crumb? No; we fetch all our food from heaven. Real Christians feel that they are not at home; they are strangers and pilgrims upon earth, as all their fathers were; they are seeking a better country. Many times they fear that they shall miss the way, or that difficulties will press them down. *Fear not*. Take courage, thou child of God. The Angel of the Covenant shall travel with you—the Lord of Hosts. Is that enough?—*Rev. Thomas Jones*.

3D MONTH.]

CANTICLES VIII. 5.

[25TH DAY.

"WHO is this that *cometh up*?" Behold the Church rising to view! She is coming up out of the wilderness, and drawing towards the land of promise. In every age has the Church been rising. In the time of the millennium she will have *great* glory, and at last she will come up clean out of the wilderness to return no more for ever. She is rising now in grace; she is struggling to get above the earth. This element is too gross for her to breathe in: she longs for a purer air, a different soil, an unclouded sky. She has a thousand loads upon her, and groans, being burdened. She longs to get up. She looks forward from the top of Tabor towards her native land: by faith she catches a glimpse of its glories. Every child of God is pressing towards home. Grace naturally draws towards heaven, from whence it came. The true Christian rises gradually from darkness to light; from weakness to strength; from sorrow to joy; from fear to hope. She waxes stronger and stronger, until she appears before God in Zion. She is *coming up*.

With salvation's walls surrounded,
She is safe from all her foes.

—*Rev. Thomas Jones.*

3D MONTH.]

CANTICLES VIII. 5.

[26TH DAY.

“LEANING upon her Beloved.” *How* does the Church travel? Leaning upon her Beloved. The trembling sinner looks at the Church leaning, and he says, I will do so too. I did not before know how I should go, but this I see is the safe way, so I will learn likewise. The Church leans upon the *atonement*. She sees the blood of Christ to be all-sufficient, and says, I can rest upon this. She leans upon the *wisdom* of her Beloved; and if Christ’s wisdom is used by her, she is sure of being directed aright, every step of the way, through this dreary wilderness. She leans upon Christ’s arm for *strength*. If she did not lean she could not take one step; but all enemies, in all worlds, and all worlds united together, cannot conquer one that is leaning upon Christ. The Church leans upon the bosom of her Saviour’s love. Like John, she has learned to rest there. She rejoices in Him with joy unspeakable. Christ is in every way dear to his Church; yes, dear and precious to the heart of every true Christian. Do you think Jesus is gone to heaven, and left his Church as a widow? No; feeble as she is, it is impossible to press her down, for “underneath are the everlasting arms.”

On the Rock of Ages founded,
What can shake her sure repose?

—Rev. Thomas Jones.

3D MONTH.]

PSALM XC. 9.

[27TH DAY.

“WE spend our years as a tale that is told.” Life is not only short, but glides imperceptibly away, like the time occupied in listening to a tale. Time is ever on the wing, and rapid in its flight, but its progress is unobserved. *Unperceived*, it robs us of our hours, days, and years, till it has robbed us of our whole life, and left us, almost before we are aware, on the bosom of eternity. Seeing that life thus passes, it should be the care of us all that it be not misspent, or its opportunities unimproved. Some tales are light and trifling, merely to amuse: such, also, is the life of some; they tread a round of vanity, always light-hearted, never serious. Other tales are of a graver cast, and turn on the interests of human life; but are altogether worldly in their tone and tendency. So with the lives of many; they are industrious, enterprising, diligent; but they have no concern about spiritual things. Some tales are tales of truth: they give an account of godly men, who served God in their generation, and died in peace. Such are the lives of Christians. They are using the means of grace, and growing in weanedness from the world; they seek the salvation of others, and prepare themselves for the coming of the Lord. What does *our* life resemble? what kind of tale? Pause and consider, lest the closing scene come too soon. Look forward to the end—to the interests of eternity. The tale of human life is soon told; but how momentous are its issues! The events now passing may be those of the last chapter of the tale. Tarry not. Make sure of your salvation.—*Rev. W. H. Hewitson.*

3D MONTH.]

LUKE XVI. 8.

[28TH DAY.

"THE children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light." There is no question but that Satan's armies are by far the most numerous, the most zealous, and the most diligent. Shame to the children of Zion! they have infinitely a better cause and more encouragement; they have God on their side, and the exceeding great and eternal weight of glory for their inheritance: yet for all this they suffer the men of this world to take the lead in zeal, diligence, and energy. You will find this tone whether you look to the field of politics or the field of religion. The whole world is like a great boiling pot, hot and restless. Time, also, is like a rapid wheel which incessantly whirls round, and constantly brings new sceneries to view. We are reluctantly compelled to look at all nations let loose to produce as much anarchy, noise, confusion, and misery as they possibly can. So far as it appears, days of darkness, and times of trial, are coming on this guilty land. It is high time for peaceable pilgrims to call aloud for wisdom, help, and protection from the King of Zion, to deliver them from danger, and to guide them in the way everlasting. Antichrist comes in like a flood, and the harbingers of Popery are crying aloud, "Prepare the way for the Man of Sin." Take heed to yourselves lest that day come upon you unawares. "I say unto you all, Watch."—*Rev. Thomas Jones.*

3D MONTH.] ISAIAH XXIV. 20; XXVI. 19. [29TH DAY.

"THE earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage." "Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." Great and solemn crisis. One in a family shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Our separations now are but *dim shadows* of that last terrible one! I ask you individually, as before God, are you a Christian? Here is your unhappy mistake. When I bid you be religious, you fancy I am urging you to take some nauseous drug, necessary, in order that you may be saved, but which you would rather postpone to the very *last*. In beseeching you to be Christians, I bid you be *happy*. In inviting you to come to Christ, I invite you to be a partaker of a joy and peace which you have never tasted before. I ask you—Are you the children of God? Are you Christians *indeed*? Do not leave the question unsettled. It *can* be settled. The man whose heart is changed, and he alone, has settled it. The man whose trust is on the Rock of Ages knows that he *is so*. Examine yourselves. Judge ye. I speak unto reasonable men. "If any man be in Christ, he is a *new creature*." God grant that at the solemn hour we may be found ready to obey the Saviour's voice, and to rise and reign with Him in glory. "Behold, He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him." "Awake, ye dead, and come to judgment."—*Dr. Cumming*.

3D MONTH.]

MATTHEW XXVI. 33.

[30TH DAY.

"THOUGH all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended." These were the words of a great disciple. Alas! Peter, thou knowest not thine own heart; it is but like a quiet sea—when the wind, the temptation, shall blow, thou wilt quickly be troubled, and find an alteration: thy tide will turn, and an ebb of thy zeal will follow. Who could have expected or feared adultery from such a man as David, after such communion with God? impatience from such a man as Jeremiah, after such revelations from God? idolatry from such a man as Solomon, after so much wisdom from God? fretfulness and frowardness of spirit from such a man as Jonah, after such deliverances from God? fearfulness in such a man as Abraham, after so much protection from God? cursing from such a man as Job, after so much patience and experience from God? Oh! in such examples learn thyself, and fear thyself. The disciples could say, "Master, is it I that shall betray thee?" Peter did not ask, "Master, is it John?" nor John, "Master, is it Thomas?" but every one, "Is it I?" "If any man fall, restore him with the spirit of meekness," saith the Apostle, "considering thyself;" that is, "do not rejoice against thy brother: do not despise him in thine heart, nor exalt thyself: thou art of the same mould; thou hast the same principles with him: that God which hath forsaken him may forsake thee; that temptation which hath overcome him may happen unto thee; that enemy which hath sifted him may winnow thee; and, therefore, in his fall, learn compassion towards him, and jealousy towards thyself." Restore him, and consider thyself.—*Bishop Reynolds.*

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